

# Town of McCandless

## Master Site Development Plans



**December  
2025**

PASHEK  MTR



# Acknowledgments

This Plan reflects significant contributions of time, expertise, and advice from the following individuals, as well as input and perspective from a variety of stakeholders and the many people who live and/or work in the Town of McCandless. This Plan would not have been possible without the valuable assistance of all.

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### GTRP ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This project was partially financed by a grant from the Greenway, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) administered by the Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA). Grant # CFA#C00008819

This Plan was prepared with the assistance of: 



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# Executive Summary

## APPLAUSE, PLEASE!

The Town of McCandless is continually focused on developing and enhancing a community residents can live, work, play and thrive in. With five devoted park spaces, and the potential of adding more active and passive recreational opportunities, this Plan provides a foundation to guide the Town in the further growth and development of both its park spaces and recreational programming. The concepts included in this Plan are based on analysis of existing conditions, public input, and research. The Plan emphasizes active and passive recreation, community engagement, accessibility and sustainability. These key factors will provide McCandless with functional and welcoming park spaces.

### The Parks

McCandless is currently the home of four dedicated active recreation park spaces and one passive park space: Devlin Park, Wall Park, Vestal Park, Vincentian Park, and Potter Park. During the development of this plan, the Town acquired the Maier (Sarver) property adjacent to Potter Park which will expand this area's passive, natural recreation space. The Town also owns the former Public Works storage area property known as Pontiac Park which can be developed into a well-located active park area.

Each park is unique in its features, and each park can be enhanced to add more recreational opportunities for the community. Existing conditions of each park were carefully analyzed during the development of this Plan. This information contributes to how each park can be expanded to allow for more use.

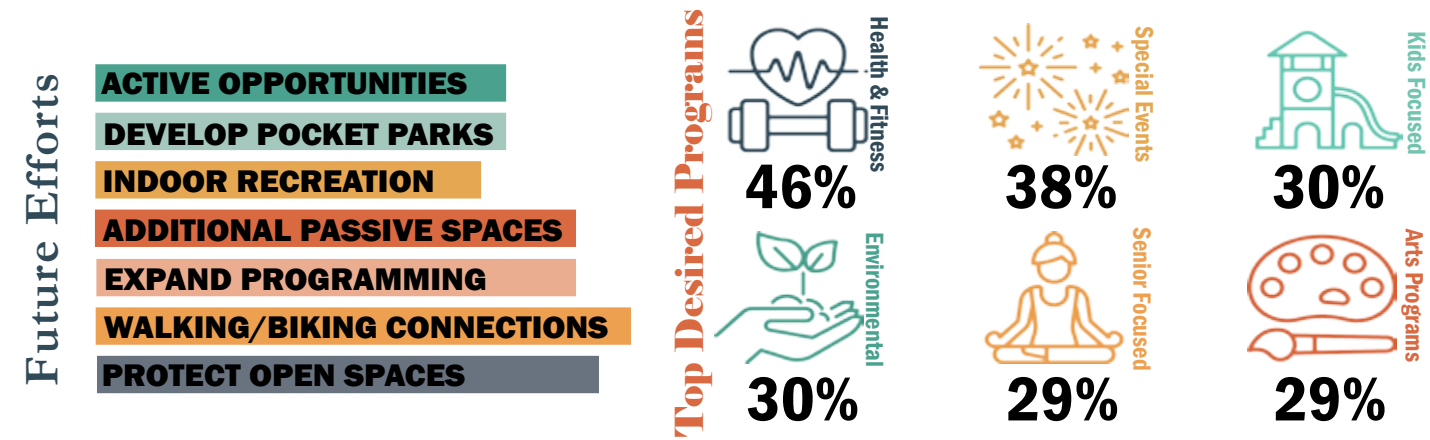
### Public Engagement

Opportunities for one-on-one conversations with people of the community abounded during the development of this Plan. This included an online questionnaire which garnered over 800 responses. Many community events were attended and booths set up so visitors could see and discuss concept plans and images. Public meetings were held in which attendees could view large maps of the parks and talk about what they like about their parks, the improvements they would like to see, and how both active and passive recreation fits into the fabric of the McCandless community.

The gathered information and thoughts from community members were instrumental in the development of the concepts within this Plan. The promotion of parks and recreation begins with the users of the McCandless parks. They will be the greatest assets in the implementation of this Plan.







Recommendations and Implementation

To remain a viable part of the McCandless community, its parks and recreation assets must demonstrate growth in upgraded and well maintained park space, increased public access, and new programming to meet changing needs. With five dedicated park spaces and the addition of other open spaces, the parks and recreation needs of McCandless can grow and flourish.

Recommendations for each park space include not only the addition and improvement of facilities, but the preservation of green space, existing trails, and lasting sustainability of the outdoor areas McCandless residents enjoy. Key features of park improvements include:

- Improving and expanding parking and circulation
- Accessibility to all park amenities
- Lighting and baseball field enhancements
- Trail improvements and further connections to neighborhoods and other parks
- Preservation of passive recreation areas
- Amenities that will further recreation programming (e.g.: trails, pavilions, fields, courts)

In addition to recommended upgrades, this Plan also lays out cost estimates for improvements, sustainable maintenance practices, and suggestions for finding resources to finance and support the parks. Additional programming will also bring more people to the parks, provide ways for residents to be involved within the community, and give the Town resources to continually augment its parks, trails, and outdoor spaces.

Parks are meant to be enjoyed. They provide safe outdoor spaces for people of all ages to enjoy time with family and friends, feel challenged in learning new sports, and find respite in nature. This Plan will guide McCandless’s progress in improving community health through enhanced parks and recreation.

WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

Town of McCandless Parks Master Plan

The Town of McCandless is working with the community to create a master site development plan for future park development, connectivity, and community programming.

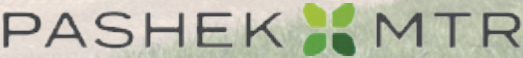
We want to hear from **YOU!** Please complete this community questionnaire by **March 11th** to share **YOUR** thoughts on future improvements.

Scan Now  
To fill out the questionnaire.

Or visit: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/NK5W5HL](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NK5W5HL)  
Paper copies are available at Town Hall.



Want more information?  
Contact Heather Cuyler at  
[hcuyler@pashekmtr.com](mailto:hcuyler@pashekmtr.com) or (724) 272-9144





# Community Background

## 1



### OUR TOWN: McCANDLESS

McCandless was essentially a farming community with a rather small population of farmers owning vast acres of land. It was officially created in 1851 and named after Judge Wilson McCandless, a prominent person in his day. Within the next 50 years, Perry Highway and the Harmony Shore Line passed through McCandless, connecting its residents to Pittsburgh which brought growth and expansion to the area.

The Depression and World War II slowed growth, but the area once again boomed after the War. To avoid the problems of utilities, schools and roads that accompany burgeoning development, McCandless adopted zoning ordinances as early as 1947 to ensure the people of their community could enjoy their homes, schools, roads, parks, and shops.

Today, McCandless continues to grow. The 16.4 square-mile Town is now the home of nearly 30,000 people. Neighborhoods spot the landscape, commercial corridors continue to grow, it is the home of LaRoche University as well as the North Allegheny School District, and it's parks and open spaces are well worth preserving.

### McCandless's Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces

McCandless is a community that has everything: neighborhoods, restaurants, shopping, entertainment, schools, and parks. People from outside the community visit for the shopping, restaurants and always busy North Park. But people within the community know that while North Park is a County gem, they have five beautiful parks of their own:

- Devlin Park
- Wall Park
- Vestal Park
- Potter Park
- Vincentian Park

These parks are maintained by the McCandless Department of Public Works. The programming within these parks is overseen by the Director of Parks and Recreation in cooperation with Town Council, the local sports associations, and other Town committees.





Past Planning Recreation Efforts

"A McCandless Conversation" , the Town's Implementable Comprehensive Plan (2019) has been a valuable resource in creating and developing this Plan. This plan laid out Five Key Issues addressing McCandless's park and recreation needs, discussing each Issue in a Q&A fashion. These Issues included:

- Community Activities  
STRATEGIES: Create Community Activities Advisory Committee & Develop Programs, Events, and Activities for the Community
- Green Space and Sustainability  
STRATEGIES: Pursue Platinum Certification from Sustainable Pennsylvania Communities Program & Sustain or Improve Green Space

Other Plans that have been used as references include Pennsylvania's 2025-2029 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and the National Park and Recreation Association's Park Metrics.

Population Trends			
Year	Population	Growth	Growth Rate
2025	~ 29,258	~ - 447	~ - 1.5%
2020	29,705	1,248	4.4%
2010	28,457	- 545	- 1.9%
2000	29,002		

Demographic, Social, and Economic Analysis

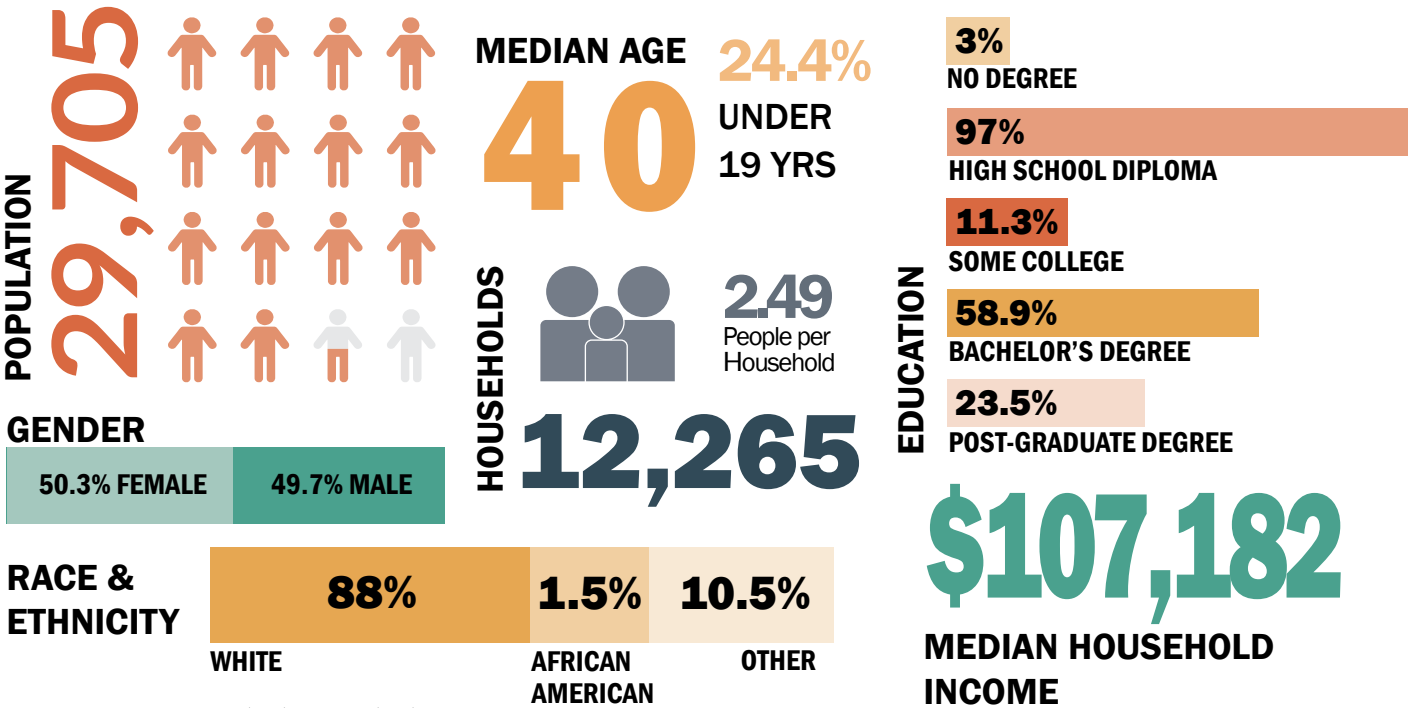
Understanding how population is distributed among various age groups is relevant when determining how to meet the recreational needs of an area. For purposes of benchmarking and comparison, the distribution of the population within certain age ranges in 2025 have been compared to the corresponding statistics from 2010. By doing so, we can draw the following conclusions about McCandless:

- The **total population** increased from 28,457 (2010) to 29,705 (2020) which counteracts the decrease between 2000 and 2010, giving the Town a 2.4% population increase over those 20 years. However, current estimates suggest the population has decreased 1.5% in the past 5 years to around 29,258, casting further growth into doubt. Unfortunately, decreases in population are being seen throughout Allegheny County and economists see this trend continuing.
- The population of **over 65 years of age** increased from 16.1% (2010) to 21.5% (2020), following national norms as "Baby Boomers" age and retire.
- The population **under the age of 19** has increased from 20.8% (2010) to 24.4% (2020), indicating a growth of younger families to the community.

What does this mean?

After an initial population boom in the 1970's and 80's, McCandless has steadily grown in population over the past 20 years. Economists currently project slight decreases in the rural areas of Pennsylvania over the next 20 to 30 years. However, as McCandless is near the City of Pittsburgh, it may be able to ward off significant decreases by attracting those who work within the City but want to live in a nearby but more rural community.

Like many communities, McCandless's population continues to age. The need for recreational opportunities for seniors is a subject worthy of discussion. The younger population is also growing, indicating that McCandless is attracting young Millennial families to its community. Statistically Millennials enjoy outside activities, both programmed (sports, events, etc.) and passive (hiking, biking, etc.) and share this pleasure with their families. Sports associations



should continue to be encouraged, programs in pickleball and tennis are a great start, and the Town's desire to increase trails and connectivity will engage their current residents and attract future inhabitants.

Transportation

The Route 19 Corridor (including McKnight Rd.) are the Town's major thoroughfares and have brought increasing growth to the community as it has developed into a more commercial corridor. Route 19 actually extends as far south as Greene County into West Virginia and stretches through both Mercer and Crawford counties and into the City of Erie.

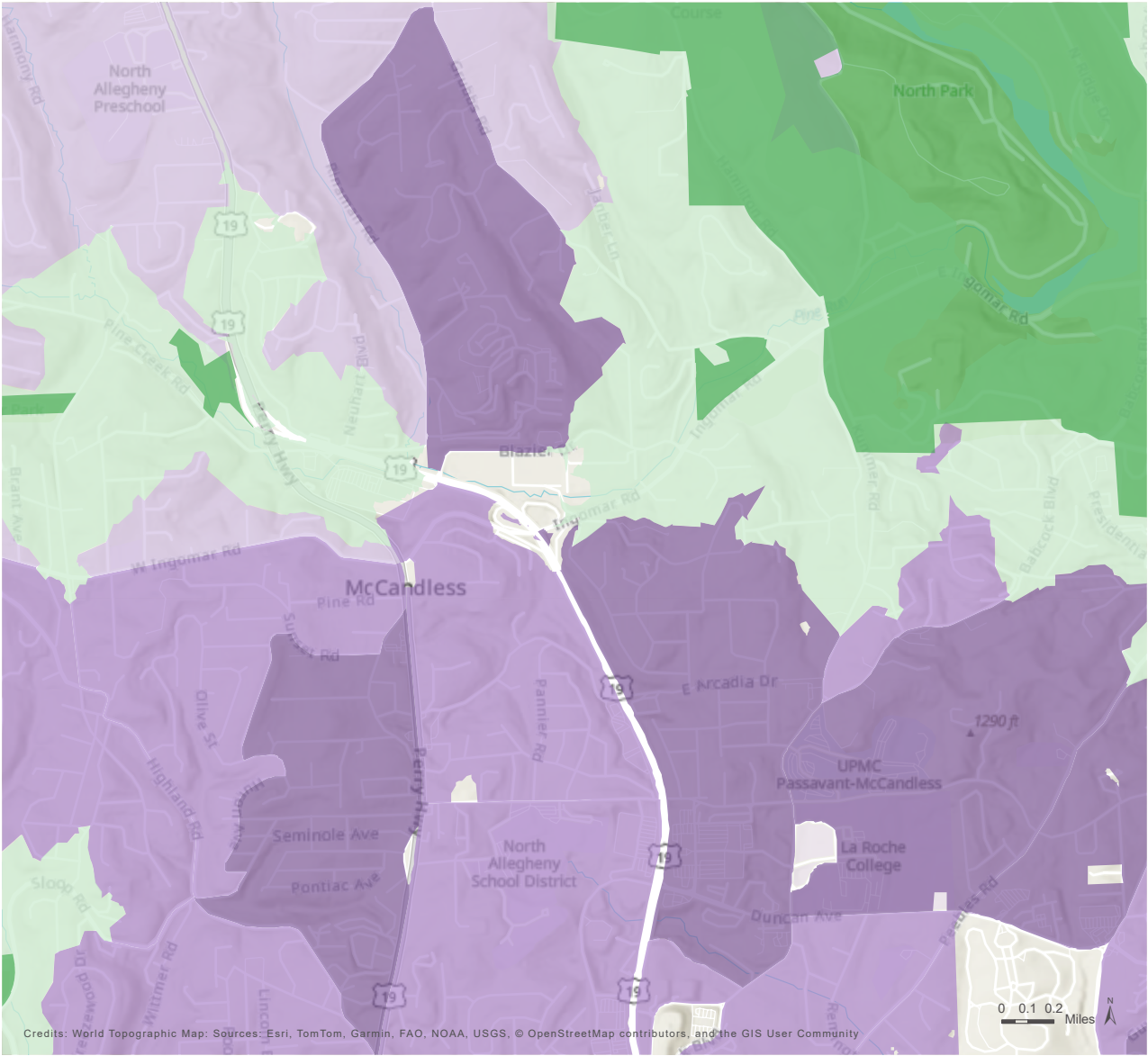
Walkability

The popularity of non-vehicular transportation continues to grow and is an important piece of what McCandless would like to further within their community. Of the Five Key Issues in "A McCandless Conversation", Active Transportation and Connectivity was the first. It included strategies to develop an east-west shared-use trail along Pine Creek, a north-south active transportation corridor in the Babcock Blvd/Kummer Road area, and a north-south active transportation route in the Harmony Trail corridor near Wall Park.

Like many western Pennsylvania communities, challenges abound in creating opportunities for active transportation. The rolling hills and vast woodlands - while beautiful and inspiring - pose difficulties in the development of trails and easy connections. The busy Route 19 Corridor adds to the complexity of safe routes between the neighborhoods, schools, parks, and shopping districts of the Town. According to Trust for Public Land's 10-Minute Walk, only 16% of McCandless's population can walk to either North Park or one of it's five parks.



# ParkServe Map Export



- ParkServe Place
- Park with public access
- 10-minute walk service area
- Priority areas for new parks (place)
- Very high priority
- High priority
- Moderate priority
- World\_Hillshade

## Schools

It is little wonder that many families in Allegheny County make McCandless their home. The North Allegheny School District was recognized by the 2026 NICHE Rankings as the #1 school district in Pittsburgh, the #2 district in Pennsylvania, and the #25 school district in America. McCandless is also the home of private schools and the beautiful campus of LaRoche University.

## North Allegheny School District

The North Allegheny School District (NASD) is a very large district with seven elementary schools, three middle schools and two high schools (separated into grades 9-10 and 11-12). The district serves the Town of McCandless, Marshall Township, Borough of Bradford Woods, and Franklin Park Borough. These schools are considered some of the top schools both for academics and sports in Pennsylvania.

The NASD's administrative offices are located within the Town's borders as well as Peebles Elementary, Hosack Elementary, McKnight Elementary, Ingomar Elementary, Carson Middle School, North Allegheny Intermediate School and North Allegheny Senior High School.

This district offers many sports and athletic programs including: football, basketball, baseball, bowling, golf, lacrosse, soccer, tennis, volleyball, wrestling, cheerleading, cross country, field hockey, water polo, flag football, ice hockey, gymnastics, track and field, in-line hockey, rowing, slow-pitch softball, softball, swimming & diving, and unified bocce.

## Higher Learning

LaRoche University offers more than 50 undergraduate and six graduate degrees. It is a small school with a student body of about 2,000 students, but it offers 30-plus student organizations and a NCAA Div. III athletics program. It sits upon a beautiful 43-acre campus in McCandless on Babcock Boulevard.

Community College of Allegheny (CCAC) is a local community college created in 1965 with four campuses in Allegheny County, including its North Campus located on Perry Highway in McCandless. It offers associate degrees, certificates or transfers to a four-year college. The North Campus opened in 1972 and offers 55 different certificate or associates degrees. It draws approximately 38,000 students a year. Although CCAC offers sports, none of them are played at North Campus.

## Other Park and Recreational Opportunities

As previously mentioned, McCandless is the home of five Town parks. The Town serves as an entryway to Allegheny County's 3,075-acre North Park which is located in the northeast part of the Town as well as in Hampton Township and Township of Pine. North Park is a very popular location for both passive and active recreation as it includes a large lake, swimming pool, splashpad, golf course, ice skating rink, playgrounds, and miles of hiking, walking, biking and mountain biking and equestrian trails. North Park is also the western terminus of the Rachel Carson Trail which then runs east and south for 45.7 miles to Harrison Hills Park.

## Conclusion

McCandless is a beautiful community very strategically located along Route 19. The people who make it their home love its location, schools, neighborhoods, rolling hills, outdoor opportunities...and future possibilities.



# Inventory & Analysis

## 2

### FIVE GREAT PARKS (& GROWING!) = OUTDOOR FUN

McCandless is the home of parks, ballfields, trails, and all the active and passive outdoor fun they contain. The focus of this Master Plan is the Town's five designated park spaces:

- Devlin Park
- Wall Park
- Vestal Park
- Potter Park
- Vincentian Park

These parks are the homes to a variety of amenities: pavilions, ballfields (soccer, baseball, t-ball, softball, multi-purpose), courts (tennis, basketball, pickleball), playgrounds, trails, and streams. They are the sites of organized ballgames, pick-up games, summer mornings of play, fitness classes and lessons, and community events such as the yearly Community Day, Easter Egg Hunt, Winterfest, and National Night Out. In essence, they are each a vital part of the McCandless community - for both residents and visitors alike.

During this planning process, the former Town fill site, known as Pontiac Park was reviewed in addition to the newly acquired Maier (Sarver) property which is adjacent to Potter Park.

### Where are we Now?

An important piece of the Master Planning Process is knowing your starting place. What are our recreational assets currently? How do they align to national metrics? Do we have enough ballfields for current athletic needs...or enough parking to support what we do have? How can our passive recreational assets be improved and maintained for the enjoyment of our community? Each of these questions and more are vital starting places on which a solid, implementable Park Master Plan is built.

This chapter will review each of the five parks in detail: existing conditions and facilities, topography, soil conditions, etc. It is from this information that recommendations are developed and can be implemented.







# Devlin Park

9955 Grubbs Road  
23 Acres

Located within the "Town Hall Recreation Complex", this park is a very popular among all ages. Built in 1979, the park functions as a central gathering place for youth athletics, adult recreation, community events, and cultural programming. Its diverse mix of municipal facilities and recreation amenities makes Devlin Park a year-round destination for residents of all ages.

Devlin Park presents a significant opportunity to improve functionality, modernize aging infrastructure, and enhance the user experience. The Town’s vision is to transform this park into a more inclusive, multi-generational space that continues to support its strong sports identity while also broadening its appeal to passive users, families, seniors, and visitors seeking daily recreation, wellness, and community amenities.

The site hosts a wide-range of facilities which support both the civic operations and public recreation within McCandless:

- McCandless Town Hall
  - Devlin Memorial Pavilion (rental)
  - McCandless–Northern Allegheny Heritage & Cultural Center
  - Tennis Courts (2)
  - Pickleball Courts (4)
- Basketball Court
  - Baseball/Softball Field
  - UPMC Fitness Court
  - Sand Volleyball Court
  - Soccer Fields (2)
  - Children’s Playgrounds (2)

This unique mix of municipal, recreational, and cultural uses positions Devlin Park as more than just a sports complex—it is a civic and community center that supports daily activity, special events, and cross-generational engagement.

The Town recognizes the importance of updating and integrating these amenities to create a cohesive experience for users. Opportunities include improved pedestrian connections, expanded recreation areas, better wayfinding, and enhancements to support community gatherings, wellness activities, and year-round use.

Existing Conditions			
Facility	Condition	Lights	Accessibility
Multipurpose Field 1 (natural turf)	Good	No	No
Multipurpose Field 2 (natural turf)	Good	No	No
Playground 1	New	No	Yes
UPMC Fitness Court	Great	No	Yes
Sandbox	Great	No	Yes
Parking Lot 1	Good	Yes	Yes
McCandless-Northern Allegheny Heritage & Cultural Center	Good	Yes	Yes
Baseball/Softball Field - 300, 300, 300	Poor	Yes	No
Pickleball Court (4)	Good	No	Yes
Bleachers (2)	Fair	No	No
Basketball Court	Good	No	Yes
Bridge	Good	No	Yes
Sand Volleyball Court	Poor	No	No
Playground 2	Good	No	No
Parking Lot 2	Good	Yes	Yes
Dugouts (2)	Good	No	No
Tennis Court (2)	Good	No	Yes

## Access, Circulation and Parking

Devlin Park benefits from multiple points of entry, allowing users to access different areas of the site based on their intended activities. The primary parking area is located along the southern edge of the park and serves as the main gateway for the soccer fields and nearby recreational amenities. From this lot, visitors cross a pedestrian bridge that leads directly into the center of the park, providing a safe and intuitive arrival sequence.

Additional parking is available to the north, near the McCandless Town Building and associated municipal facilities. This lot provides convenient access to Town Hall and the majority of amenities. Visitors are able to utilize both parking areas during their visit. This approach reduces congestion around municipal operations, improves traffic flow, and enhances safety for both park users and staff working in adjacent facilities.

Improving internal pedestrian pathways, accessibility, circulation patterns, and wayfinding will be key components of the Master Plan recommendations, ensuring that Devlin Park’s multi-use campus functions efficiently and safely for all users.

In 2025, the Town installed heaters for winter use of the restrooms. Pickleball, tennis, and basketball courts will be available for use year-round (weather dependent).

A majority of those surveyed said...  
**#1 Comment**  
Facilities season too short.

Excellent

Safety  
Location

Good

Cleanliness  
Attractiveness  
Facilities Available  
Parking





Environmental and Physical Site Characteristics

Topography

Devlin Park’s topography varies across the 23-acre site, creating both opportunities and challenges for future improvements. Areas of gentle slope support athletic fields and active recreation, while steeper sections may lend themselves to naturalized landscapes, trails, or stormwater features. A detailed grading assessment will need to be conducted before the placement of new amenities to ensure accessibility across the site.

The FEMA map located on the next page provides further information on the site. The red hatched areas are Zone AE floodways, which should remain undisturbed. If structures are placed in these areas, minor ones (benches, swings, etc.) may be allowed but larger structures would require intensive permitting with the PA Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP), the Army Corps of Engineers, and FEMA.

The light blue areas are Zone AE floodplains. These areas can be impacted. However, the base flood elevation increase should be less than 1-foot on the site, and no rise in the base flood elevation can occur upstream of downstream of the property. A flood plain analysis would be required and proposed structures would need to meet floodproofing requirements as specified in the Town's Ordinance. Depending on the impact to these areas, it may also require permitting through the PA DEP and Army Corps.

Hydrology and Stormwater

The site contains several existing stormwater conveyance features that manage runoff from both the park and surrounding municipal facilities. Future improvements may include updated stormwater infrastructure, green stormwater practices, improved drainage near high-use areas, and potential opportunities for educational or interpretive environmental features. It should also be noted that the above mentioned floodways and floodplains should be considered in any stormwater management changes/improvements.

Soils

Soil characteristics across the site vary, particularly between the developed municipal areas and the recreational open spaces. These soils contain Atkins silt loam, Ernest silt loam, and Gilpin-Upshur complex. Some soils are located within highly sloped areas which allow for good drainage, but lower areas of the park do flood or pond which limits how the site can be developed.

Vegetation

Vegetation within the park is a mix of maintained turf associated with sports facilities, landscaped areas around civic buildings, and pockets of mature tree canopy.

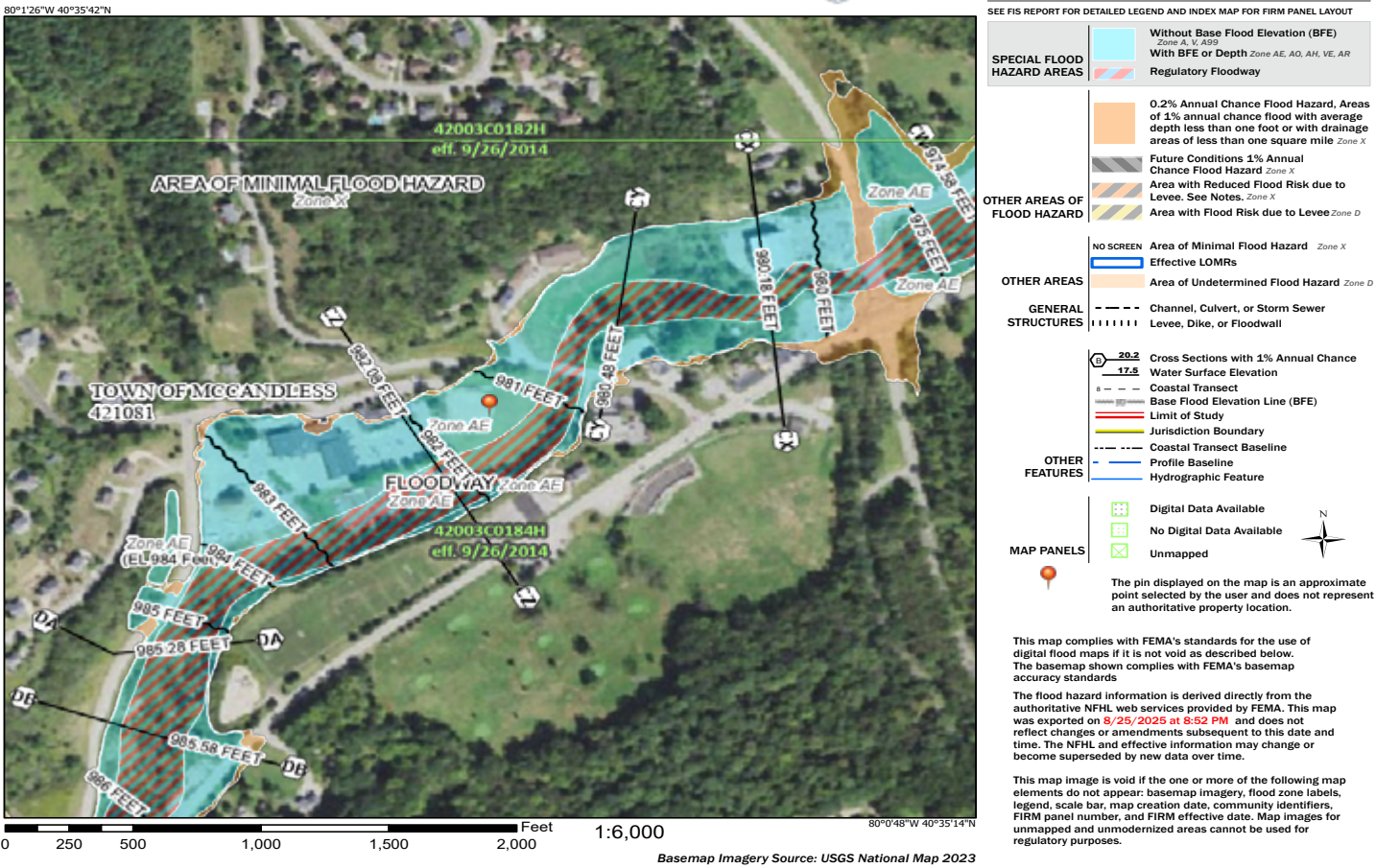
PNDI

The PNDI environmental review found no impacts to PNDI listed species in the project area. The full PNDI report is provided in the Appendix.

Historical and Cultural Resources

The McCandless–Northern Allegheny Heritage & Cultural Center, located within Devlin Park, serves as a significant cultural asset. Its presence enhances the park’s role as a place of learning, community memory, and local storytelling. Future improvements will consider opportunities to better connect the Heritage Center to surrounding park amenities and to integrate cultural interpretation within the landscape.

National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette







# Wall Park

8741 Sloop Road  
77.56 Acres

Named after James R. Wall, a former North Allegheny administrator who was passionate about youth education sports, Wall Park is a great park to visit. The park serves as an important youth baseball hub programmed primarily by the Ingomar Franklin Park Little League. It includes three baseball fields with dugouts. Additional amenities include two tennis courts, a rental pavilion with restrooms, two playgrounds, and a paved multipurpose court.

The Harmony-Brandt Trailhead is positioned at the park’s entrance, providing regional trail connectivity. The trail extends almost a mile to Glen Manor Road.

In recent years, the Town has completed several significant enhancements:

- **Baseball Field Reconfiguration:** Two existing fields were redesigned into three fields. Only the base-bid scope and fencing for two of the three fields were constructed.
- **Removal of Millings Stockpile:** A longstanding stockpile located within the FEMA 100-year floodplain was removed to restore natural floodplain function.
- **Culvert Replacement:** The Town obtained PA DEP Chapter 105 permits for the replacement of on-site culverts to improve hydrologic performance and fish passage to be completed in 2026.
- **New Playground Installation:** A modern play area was added in 2024, improving family-oriented amenities.
- **Trail Addition:** A new trail segment was blazed in 2023 along the Northern park of the park boundary.
- **French Drains:** Installed in 2025 to improve field drainage.

At the time these enhancements were completed, several alternates were not awarded due to cost restraints. These included replacing the grass of the infields with an engineered infield mix and the installation of a HydroBlox subsurface drainage system throughout the fields. These improvements could be considered in the future by the Town to allow for better drainage and less pooling of water on the ballfields. Currently, the infield is grass and french drains eliminate the need for a subsurface system.

Existing Conditions			
Facility	Condition	Lights	Accessibility
Parking/Pull Off/Trail Parking	Fair	No	Yes
Tennis Court (2)	Good	No	Yes
Playground 1	Good	No	No
Playground 2	Good	No	No
Parking Lot	Fair	No	Yes
Basketball Court	Poor	No	No
Bleachers (6)	Fair	No	No
Pavilion with Restroom	Good	Yes	Yes
Baseball Field 1 - 115, 130, 115	Good	No	No
Baseball Field 2 - 100, 115, 100	Good	No	No
Baseball Field 3 - 130,160, 150	Good	No	No
Dugouts (6)	Good	No	No

## Access, Circulation and Parking

Wall Park is accessed directly from Sloop Road, a high-traffic corridor with fast-moving vehicles. This creates safety and congestion concerns at the park entrance, particularly during peak baseball use. Nearby residential neighborhoods across Sloop Road allow convenient pedestrian access to the trail, but the lack of a secondary vehicular access point results in:

- A single entrance/exit that leads to frequent traffic bottlenecks
- Insufficient parking capacity, especially when all three baseball fields and pavilion are in use
- Limited options for emergency or service vehicle circulation

A potential parking area was conceptually explored during the 1990s on the former millings stockpile site; however, this parking lot was never constructed. Given current demands, expanding parking remains a high priority for the Town.

The Harmony-Brandt Trail runs north of the active recreation areas, following a sanitary easement and wooded corridor. This trail connects the Ingomar neighborhood and ultimately connects to Potter Park and the Harmony Trail, supporting long-term

A majority of those surveyed said...

#1 Comment  
Insufficient parking.

Good

Cleanliness  
Attractiveness  
Safety  
Location  
Facilities Available





National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette



multimodal connectivity goals for the Town.

Environmental and Physical Site Characteristics

Topography

Wall Park is generally sloped with areas of steep grades. This topography greatly affects general circulation and field orientation, giving the park limited choices on reconfiguration.

The FEMA map located on the next page provides further information on the site. The red hatched areas are Zone AE floodways, which should remain undisturbed. If structures are placed in these areas, minor ones (benches, swings, etc.) may be allowed but larger structures would require intensive permitting with the PA Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP), the Army Corps of Engineers, and FEMA.

The light blue areas are Zone AE floodplains. These areas can be impacted. However, the base flood elevation increase should be less than 1-foot on the site, and no rise in the base flood elevation can occur upstream of downstream of the property. A flood plain analysis would be required and proposed structures would need to meet floodproofing requirements as specified in the Town's Ordinance. Depending on the impact to these areas, it may also require permitting through the PA DEP and Army Corps.

Hydrology and Stormwater

General sloping of the property gives both great potential for natural stormwater management and problematic management where some areas drain well but others sit in pooling water, especially during the early spring. It should also be noted that the above mentioned floodways and floodplains should be considered in any stormwater management changes/improvements.

Soils

Soil characteristics across the site vary and are very similar to those in Devlin Park: Atkins silt loam and Ernest silt loam in the less sloped areas. Clymer silt loam and Gilpin, Weikert, Culleoka channery silt loam can be found on the steep slopes. While this soil drains well, the slopes limit development upon those sites.

Vegetation

With heavy ballfield use, grass covers much of the usable park area. The park slopes are tree covered, and lush vegetation within the floodplain areas. Invasive plants are abundant throughout the site.

PNDI

The PNDI environmental review found no impacts to PNDI listed species in the project area. The full PNDI report is provided in the Appendix.

Historical and Cultural Resources

Wall Park does not currently contain documented historic structures. However, the Harmony-Brandt Trail could be enhanced with both natural and historical signage to provide an educational walk for groups and families.





# Vestal Park

243 Pine Court  
14.09 Acres

Located between Pine Creek Road and Route 19, this Park is primarily used by the Ingomar Franklin Park Little League. As well as three baseball fields with field lighting, amenities include a parking lot, press box, accessible concessions and restroom building, a boardwalk/trail system, a playground, batting cages, and associated storage facilities. During the spring and early summer, it is teeming with baseball players of all ages and their families.

Vestal Park’s trail network provides important connectivity within the community. The Northrop Trail link extends to the Oakridge Housing Plan and continues to the Harmony Trail, enhancing access to regional trail systems and supporting both recreation and alternative transportation opportunities.

### Access, Circulation and Parking

Vestal Park is primarily accessed from Pine Creek Road, but it can also be accessed from Route 19. However, this entrance lacks designated parking areas and does not provide ADA-accessible parking spaces. As a result, visitors with mobility challenges may experience difficulty accessing the site from this location. Circulation along Vestal Park Lane is also difficult as it is narrow without a suitable location to turn around. Improving accessibility and circulation at this entrance should be considered in future planning efforts.



Existing Conditions			
Facility	Condition	Lights	Accessibility
Parking Lot (2)	Good	Yes	Yes
Boardwalk	Good	Yes	Yes
Baseball Field 1- 205, 215, 220	Good	Yes	No
Baseball Field 2-105, 115, 110	Good	Yes	No
Baseball Field 3-180, 195, 195	Good	Yes	No
Batting Cage	Fair	No	No
Pressbox	Fair	No	No
Concession Stand with Restrooms	Good	Yes	Yes
Bleachers (6)	Fair	No	No
Dugouts (6)	Fair	No	No
Shed with Storage	Fair	No	Yes
Playground	Good	No	No

A majority of those surveyed said...

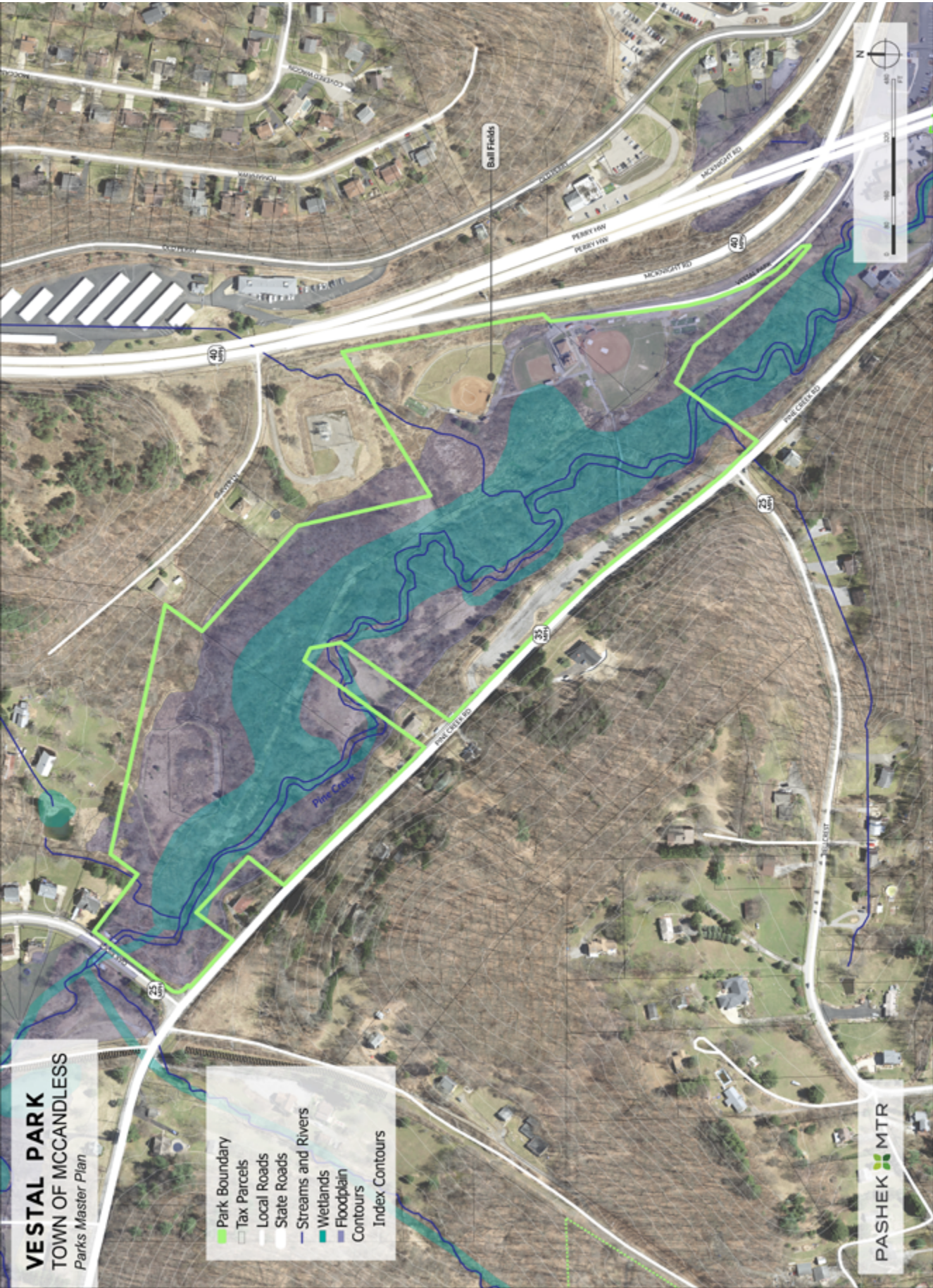
#1 Comment

No reason to visit unless you play baseball.

Good

Cleanliness  
Attractiveness  
Safety  
Location  
Facilities Available  
Parking





Environmental and Physical Site Characteristics

Topography

The site features gently rolling topography typical of the region. Grading associated with the ballfields creates areas of level ground interspersed with sloped edges that may influence drainage and accessibility.

Hydrology and Stormwater

As Pine Creek flows through the park, stormwater management remains an important consideration due to the amount of impervious surface and concentrated athletic use. Existing drainage patterns should continually be reviewed to ensure compliance with contemporary stormwater standards.

Soils

Soil characteristics across the site vary and are very similar to other parks in the area: Atkins silt loam, Ernest silt loam and Gilpin-Upshur complex in addition to Rainsboro silt. Most of these soils allow for good drainage giving potential to site development.

Vegetation

Tree cover is concentrated along the park perimeter, providing natural buffering to adjacent residential areas. Interior areas contain maintained turf associated with athletic fields and open lawn. Opportunities may exist for enhanced native riparian plantings or shade tree expansion.

PNDI

The PNDI environmental review found no impacts to PNDI listed species in the project area. The full PNDI report is provided in the Appendix.

Historical and Cultural Resources

Vestal Park does not currently contain documented historic structures, but its long use as a ballpark contributes to its local cultural value.





# Potter Park & Maier (Sarver) Property

## Harmony Road

11.36 Acres | 17 Acres (Sarver)

Potter Park has long served as one of McCandless’s most intimate natural spaces, centered on the quiet beauty of Potter Pond along Harmony Road. Its history is closely tied to the families who stewarded the land throughout the twentieth century. Jack and Delores Sarver first purchased the property in 1955, with Jack constructing the dam that created Potter Pond and cultivating many of the lakeside plantings still present today. The land later passed to Robert and Janet Potter, who generously donated it to the Town in 1975, establishing McCandless’s first municipal park.

In the fall of 2025, the Town expanded this legacy through the acquisition of the adjacent 17-acre Maier property, historically part of the Sarver family homestead. The purchase extends the park’s footprint to nearly 30 contiguous acres and links the historic pond landscape with a diverse mix of forest, meadow, and former agricultural land.

The newly acquired acreage also introduces a western access point near the Franklin Park Borough border and incorporates a collection of mature heritage trees and open meadows. Together, the properties present a rare opportunity to:

- Enhance natural resource protection through stewardship of pond, forest, and meadow habitats.
- Improve circulation and safety while maintaining the quiet, rural character that defines the site.
- Interpret the cultural landscape, including agricultural history, family land stewardship, and legacy tree plantings.
- Expand passive recreation opportunities, such as walking trails, ecological education, and nature observation.

Existing Conditions			
Facility	Condition	Lights	Accessibility
Parking Lot	Poor	No	No
Trail around Pond	Fair	No	No
Pond	Fair	No	No
Former Maier Residence	Fair	Yes	No
Mature and Heritage Trees	Good	No	No
Open Meadows (remnants of Christmas Tree Farm)	Good	No	No
Informal Internal Paths	Poor	No	No

## Access, Circulation and Parking

Access to Potter Pond is limited and challenging in its current condition. The sole entrance is located along Harmony Road—a private roadway that also serves as a driveway for several McCandless residents. Throughout community engagement sessions, residents expressed concern about the roadway’s deteriorated condition and emphasized that improvements and regular maintenance will be necessary before any renovation or increased public use of Potter Pond can occur.

At the same time, residents consistently voiced appreciation for the area’s secluded, peaceful character. Many value the sense of privacy and retreat the pond provides and wish to see these qualities preserved even as the park expands and additional amenities are considered. Honoring the park deed to maintain Potter Park as a passive park, along with the community’s desire for a tranquil, low-impact experience will be a central design goal for this portion of the Master Plan.

A majority of those surveyed said...

#1 Comment  
Hidden treaure.

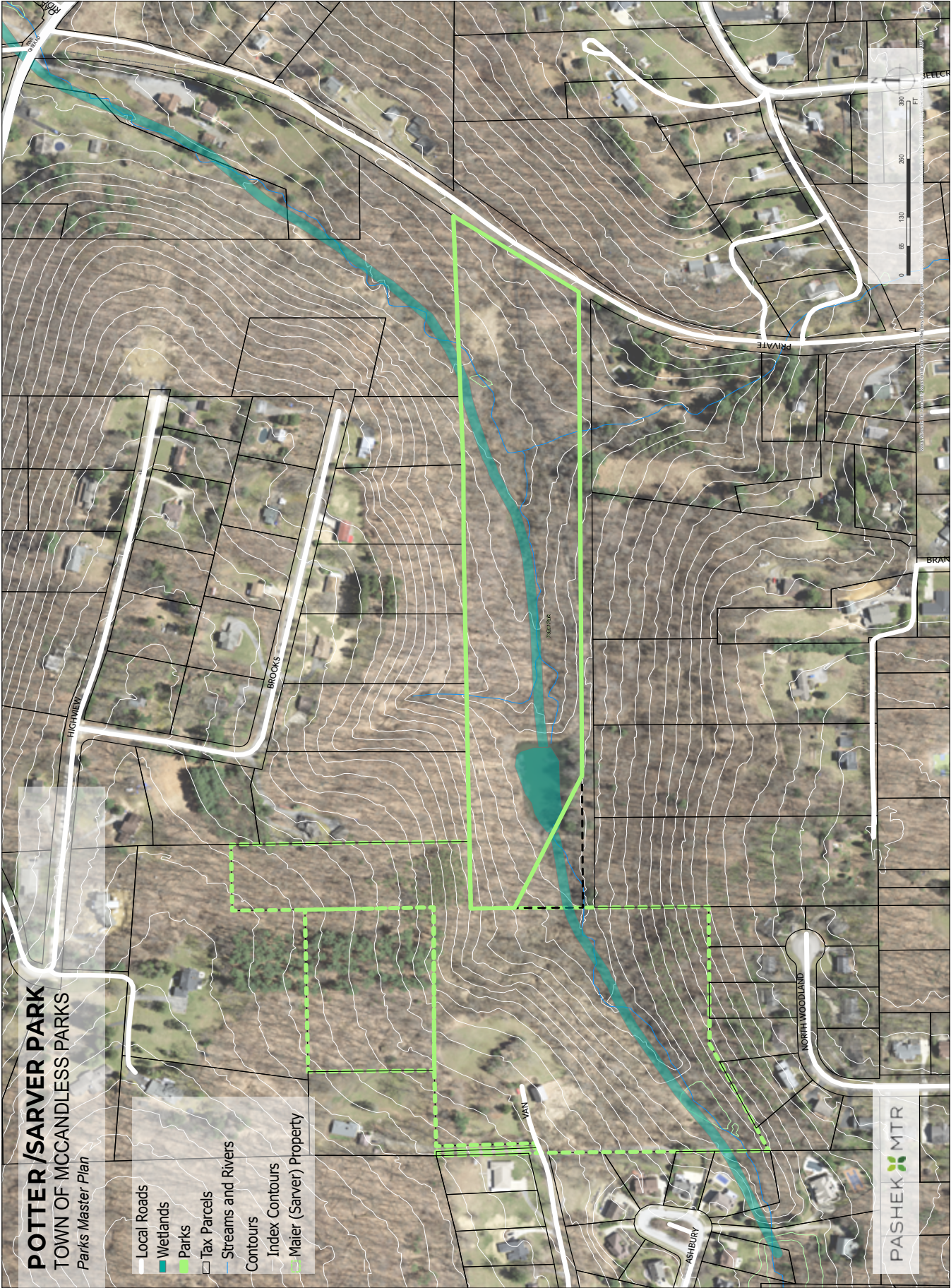
Good

Cleanliness  
Attractiveness  
Safety  
Location

Poor

Facilities Available  
Parking





Environmental and Physical Site Characteristics

Topography

The site is generally hills consistent with the Allegheny Plateau topography. The existing pond is a low laying area with slopes feeding into pond from neighboring homes.

Hydrology and Stormwater

Slope driven runoff and erosion potential. The one-acre pond, which is fed by tributaries of Pine Creek, serves as a catchment basin for runoff and surface drainage from surrounding slopes, reducing immediate downstream flow. Good potential for infiltration and groundwater recharge, buffering stormwater peak flows. As long as surrounding slopes are stable and the pond embankment is sound and maintained the existing green-space may serve as a low-impact drainage infrastructure for the local watershed.

Soils

Soil characteristics across the site vary and are similar to other parks in the area: Atkins silt loam, Ernest silt loam and Gilpin-Upshur complex. Most of these soils allow for good drainage which contribute to improvements along the trails and parking area or the development of further trails and fishing access at the pond.

Vegetation

The site is heavily tree covered with a portion as an old Christmas tree farm. The newly acquired parcel contains large historic London Plane trees. Opportunities may exist for enhanced native riparian plantings, invasive removal and shade tree expansion.

PNDI

The PNDI environmental review found no impacts to PNDI listed species in the project area. The full PNDI report is provided in the Appendix.

Historical and Cultural Resources

Both Potter Park and the Maier (Sarver) Property have historical and cultural value to the history of McCandless and the families that called the Town home. As trails are developed and improved, educational signage should be included that will tell the story of these properties.





# Vincentian Park

8059 Peebles Road  
18 Acres

The 18-acre Vincentian property, owned by the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, serves as an important recreational resource for the Town of McCandless. The site provides heavily used baseball and softball facilities that support local youth sports programming and serve families from across the community. Its fields play a vital role in meeting the Town’s demand for diamond sports fields. The property is operated under a long-term, 100-year lease agreement among the Sisters, the Town of McCandless, and the McCandless Athletic Association (McAA). Under this agreement, the Town Public Works Department and MCAA jointly maintain the grounds and facilities. While the lease ensures continued recreational use of the property, it also places restrictions on substantial site modifications, including prohibitions on field lighting, roadway reconfiguration, and major circulation improvements.

### Access, Circulation and Parking

Access to the Vincentian property is limited to a single entrance and exit, creating a one-way in-one-way out traffic pattern. The driveway is in poor condition, characterized by deteriorated pavement, potholes, and uneven surfaces. Its narrow width prevents two vehicles from passing safely in opposite directions, frequently causing congestion during peak practice and game times. These constraints pose ongoing challenges for safe and efficient vehicular flow and limit the MCAA and Town’s ability to enhance circulation under current lease restrictions.

Existing Conditions			
Facility	Condition	Lights	Accessibility
Parking Lot 1	Poor	No	Yes
Baseball Field 1 - 300, 320, 300	Good	No	Yes
Athletic Association Building	Good	Yes	Yes
Dugouts (10)	Good	No	No
Bleachers (10)	Fair	No	No
Storage Shed	Fair	No	Yes
Pavilion/Concession Stand Area	Good	Yes	No
Batting Cages	Fair	No	No
Concessions with Restrooms 1	Good	Yes	No
Baseball Field 2 - 205, 210, 195	Good	No	No
Parking Lot 3	Good	No	Yes
Baseball Field 3 - 160, 180, 160	Good	No	Yes
T-Ball Field 1 - 130, 135, 120	Good	No	Yes
T-Ball Field 2 - 110, 150, 110	Good	No	Yes
Roadways	Poor	No	No
Parking Lot 4	Poor	No	No
Playground	Good	No	Yes
Concessions with Restrooms 2	Good	Yes	Yes
Parking Lot 2	Poor	No	No

A majority of those surveyed said...

#1 Comment

Roads within the complex are in poor condition.

Good

Cleanliness  
Attractiveness  
Safety  
Location  
Facilities Available  
Parking





Environmental and Physical Site Characteristics

Topography

The site features gently rolling topography typical of the region. Grading associated with the ballfields creates areas of level ground interspersed with sloped edges that may influence drainage and accessibility.

Hydrology and Stormwater

The complex includes fields, parking lots, access roads and other impervious or compacted surfaces. Runoff from these surfaces should be properly managed to prevent poor drainage and water logged turf damage, runoff into stream tributary in the lower level of the complex.

Soils

While the soil characteristics across the site are similar to other parks in the area (Ernest silt loam and Gilpin-Upshur complex), a few varieties differ: Guernsey-Vandergrift silt loam, Urban land-Culleoka complex, and Wharton silt loam. Most of these soils allow for good drainage, with those on steeper slopes draining very well.

Vegetation

The primary function of the complex is organized youth sports which is dominated by large expanses of grass fields for baseball & softball infields. The border of the complex contains trees of no real significance, mixed deciduous forest typical of suburbs of Allegheny County.

PNDI

The PNDI environmental review found no impacts to PNDI listed species in the project area. The full PNDI report is provided in the Appendix.

Historical and Cultural Resources

Vincentian Park has a long-standing historical stewardship between the former Vincentian Sisters of Charity, the Town and the McCandless Athletic Association.





# Pontiac Park

Pontiac Ave  
2.4 Acres



The Town-owned Pontiac property and venue was formerly utilized by the Department of Public Works as a storage area and now functions as an unmanaged site. No formal maintenance is currently performed, besides regular mowing, resulting in extensive overgrowth and limited usability. While the parcel was once considered for the development of a skatepark, no detailed plans were advanced, and the site has remained vacant.

Transforming this property from an unmanaged site into a sustainable, community-serving green space represents a significant opportunity for the Town of McCandless. A developed Pontiac Park would provide accessible recreation, enhance neighborhood health and wellness, and serve as a valuable asset to the adjacent residential areas including the Nineteen North Apartments and Townhomes and the homes along Pontiac, Chippewa, Iroquois, Chickasaw and Seneca Avenues - representing over 200 households.

### Existing Conditions

The site is presently a vacant lot with no active facilities or programmed uses. Due to limited vehicular access and its proximity to established residential neighborhoods, the site currently functions primarily as an informal pedestrian pass-through. Existing conditions include:

- Overgrown vegetation
- Mature trees
- A sanitary sewer easement
- Perimeter fencing

### Access, Circulation and Parking

Pontiac Park is strategically situated between the Pontiac neighborhood and the high-traffic Route 19 commercial corridor. Although vehicle access is constrained, the site is highly walkable and ideally positioned to serve nearby residents and community destinations. The Master Plan envisions providing ADA-accessible parking to ensure equitable access for individuals with mobility challenges.

Importantly, the site lies within convenient walking distance of major institutional and educational anchors, including:

- Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) – North Campus
- North Allegheny Intermediate High School
- North Allegheny Carson Middle School
- North Allegheny McKnight Elementary
- Northland Public Library

These destinations would collectively generate consistent daily foot traffic, making Pontiac Park well suited for regular recreational use by students, residents, and community members.

### Environmental and Physical Site Characteristics

#### Topography

This parcel is relatively level. The park slopes downward from the north east corner towards the southwest.

#### Hydrology and Stormwater

A small waterway runs through the east portion of the park which is dry in the summer months. Stormwater management should consider the natural drainage flow to avoid erosion or flooding downslope.

#### Vegetation

Existing vegetation consists primarily of unmanaged brush, invasive species, and scattered mature trees. A detailed inventory will inform preservation, removal, and replanting strategies.

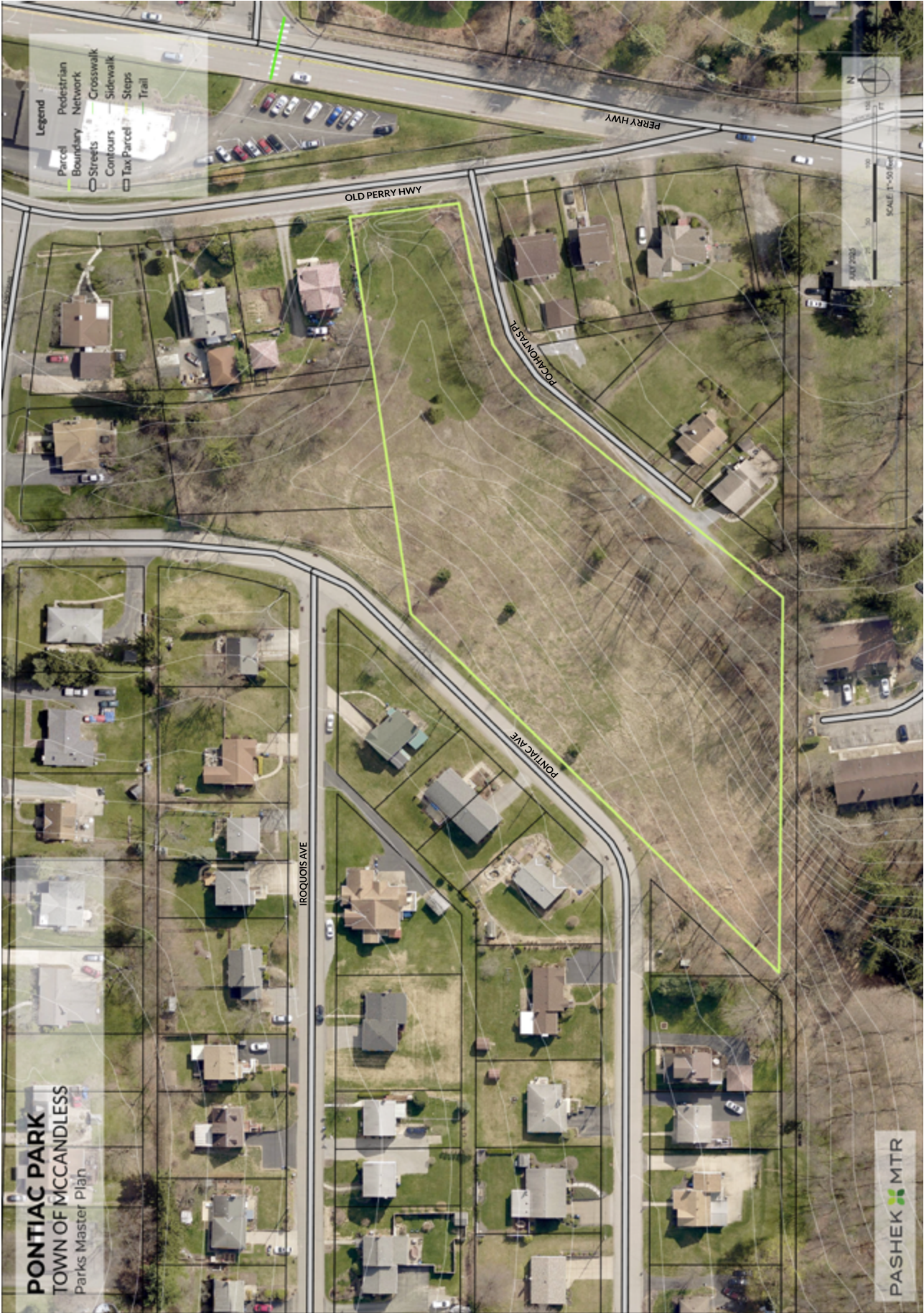
#### PNDI

The proposed Pontiac Park site is located within the Perry Highway Natural Heritage Area, which is classified as an area of State Significance. This designation is due to the presence of a tracked rare orchid species, the shining ladies’-tresses (*Spiranthes lucida*). A full PNDI report is provided in the Appendix.

#### Historical and Cultural Resources

As a former Public Works storage site, the property may contain legacy environmental conditions typical of fill site. Environmental due diligence will be required to guide remediation and ensure safe redevelopment.





Park Programming

McCandless continues to grow in park programming. This includes Town-wide events such as the Easter Egg Hunt, Community Day, National Night Out, and Winterfest. Recreational programming includes pickleball classes and round-robin, tennis clinics, nature walks, yoga in the park, and sports for kids through local athletic associations. The McCandless- Northern Allegheny Heritage & Cultural Center offers many programs to the community. These events bring hundreds of people to the community.

The Town has done well over the past few years integrating programs based upon feedback from participants and should continue to expand the opportunities this way. Bringing more facilities and opportunities to the parks themselves will also allow programming to continue to grow.

Program Comparisons	
Municipality	Annual # of Programs
Town of McCandless	11 +
Ross Township	40
Franklin Park Borough	30
Township of Pine	80
Hampton Township	50
Marshall Township	19

Trails and Connections

In McCandless's 2019 Implementable Comprehensive Plan, Key Issue #1 addressed Active Transportation and Connectivity. It stated, "McCandless wants to provide designated and constructed routes that make walking and biking safer and more comfortable and convenient as it seeks to serve current residents and businesses and attract newcomers. Increasingly, people want to walk or bike to get where they need to go, for as a leisure or fitness activity."

The plan proposed three strategies addressing trails and connectivity:

- Develop an east-west shared-use trail along Pine Creek.
- Develop a north-south active transportation corridor in the Babcock Boulevard-Kummer Road area.
- Develop a north-south active transportation route in the Harmony Trail corridor between Wall Park to the south and Pine Township line to the north.

These strategies were studied during the preparation of this Master Plan in order to understand what had been proposed, what improvements had been made within the Town over the last six years, how the Town's needs have changed, and the direction the Town's residents and leadership would like to see today and in the near future.

Trails and connectivity are important to the residents of McCandless. It is a community full of residential neighborhoods, shopping districts, and parks – both the Town's parks and North Park. Being able to safely walk or bike throughout the community is one of the highest priorities mentioned during public engagement and biking/running/walking trails ranked as the highest desired recreational opportunity. When residents were asked if they would support a system of trails and greenways, 83% of respondents said they strongly agreed.

Trails and connectivity have become increasingly important to current generations. More and more people find outdoor activities as essential to not only their physical health, but also their mental health. While activities such as pickleball and yoga continue to find followers, many people find taking walks, riding bikes, and jogging just as beneficial

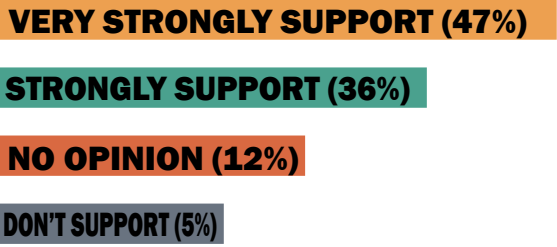


and easier to fit into their daily routine. Safe sidewalks and crossings, wooded trails, and connected routes make these activities more accessible to people of all ages.

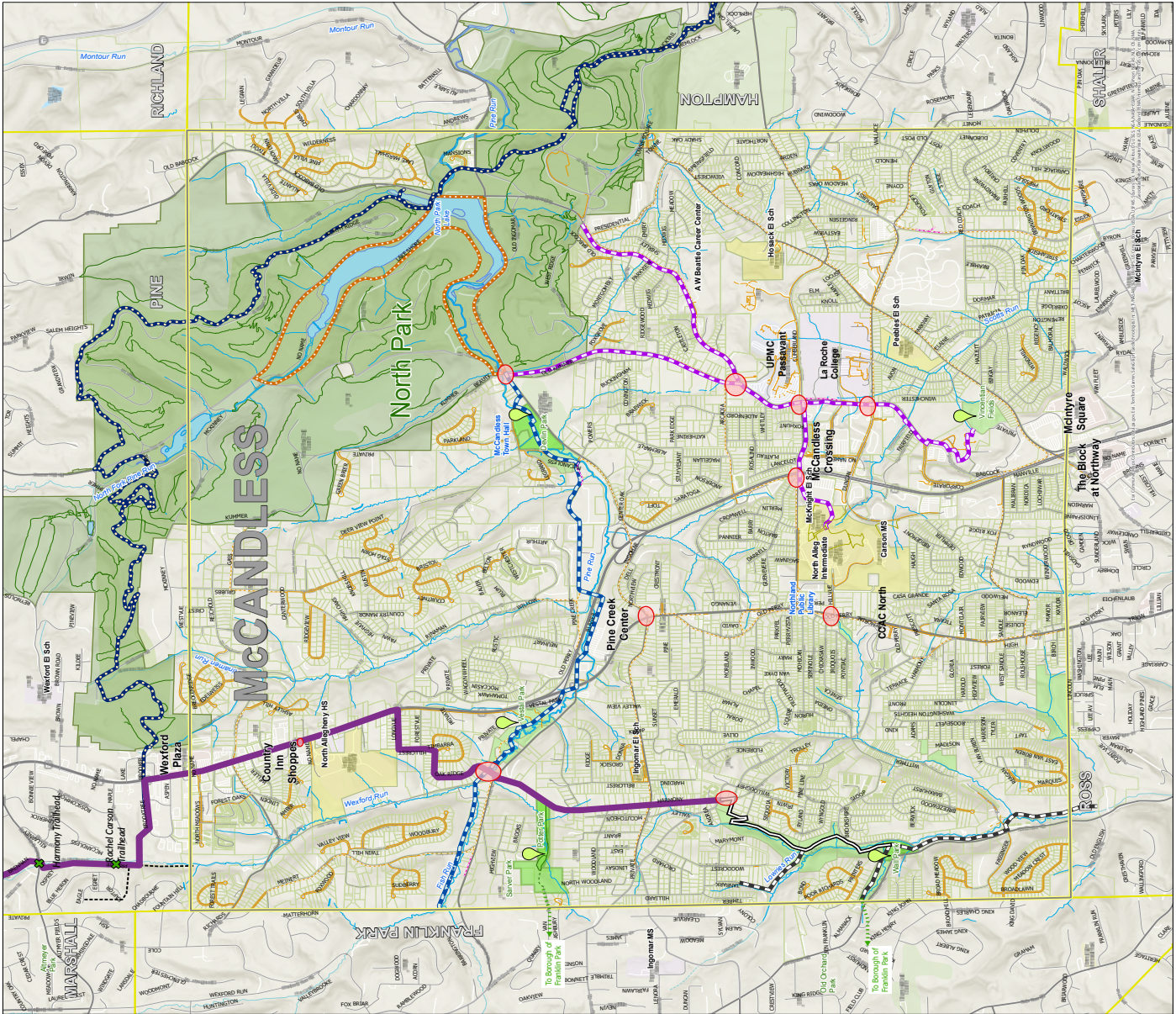
Additionally, the ability to walk or bike from their own home to work, the store, and a nearby park are fundamental to Millennials and GenZs populations. Many of these young adults desire a place to live where they have no need of a vehicle. They desire a community where they can easily and safely walk or bike from their residence to work or school, shopping districts, and social activities. For many communities, providing safe and connected routes is becoming vital to their future growth.

McCandless is well aware of its need for safe connectivity and the community’s desire for trails. However, it is also well aware that it faces the reality of Western Pennsylvania topography: hilly, wooded, and disjointed. To overcome these challenges, the Town must be creative and unafraid to start small. Building upon what the Town already possesses is the best place to start. And making small connections between the Town’s current assets will grow into larger connections.

Trail Support



Active Transportation & Connectivity Map





## NATIONAL AVERAGES

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is a national, non-profit service organization dedicated to advancing parks, recreation, and environmental efforts that enhance the quality of life for all people and impact their health and wellness. Working with agencies at all levels of government as well as private and civic partners, NRPA has established a recognized hierarchy of park types and corresponding acreage guidelines that communities can use for planning and benchmarking.

According to the 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review, which draws on data from NRPA's national benchmarking tool, Park Metrics, the typical U.S. community provides one park for every 2,411 residents. With an estimated 2025 population of 29,258, this metric suggests that the Town of McCandless would ideally be served by approximately twelve parks. The Town currently operates five municipal parks, one potential park area, and includes a significant portion of Allegheny County's North Park within its boundaries. Although the number of Towns-owned parks falls below the national average, this measure does not account for total park acreage available to the community.

For communities with populations between 20,000 and 40,000, NRPA data also recommends approximately 10.9 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Based on McCandless's population, this equates to roughly 319 acres of recommended parkland. The Town currently manages 211.1 acres of greenspace, including 68.5 acres of designated active or passive parkland – below NRPA's suggested acreage. However, an estimated 1,790 acres of the 3,075-acre North Park lie within McCandless, increasing the community's accessible park acreage to more than six times the national average.

Parks are central to a community's recreation system, providing athletic fields and courts, playgrounds, open play areas, pavilions, and other amenities. Determining the appropriate scale and variety of facilities requires evaluating multiple data points as well as the unique characteristics of the community. Each municipality has distinct needs shaped by its demographics and residents' evolving preferences. For example, communities with many young families may prioritize playgrounds, while growing youth populations increase the demand for athletic fields. As residents age, the need for low-impact recreation and gathering spaces becomes more prominent. These needs change over time, and metrics should be revisited approximately every ten years to ensure that park and recreation facilities continue to meet community expectations.

While national benchmarks provide useful guidance, the specific parks and recreation needs of McCandless must be understood within the context of its unique assets, demographics, and long-term community goals.

## INFOGRAPHIC

2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review Key Findings



4 | 2025 National Recreation and Park Association

### 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review - Park Facilities (McCandless population 29,258)

Park Facility	Median # of Residents per Facility (under 50,000 range)	Existing	Recommended	Adequate/ Deficient
Playgrounds	3,320	6	9	adequate
Basketball Courts	8,000	2	4	- 2
Pickleball Courts (outdoors)	7,333	4	4	adequate
Tennis Courts (outdoors)	6,284	4	5	- 1
Diamond Fields: Youth	3,408	13	9	+ 4
Rectangular Fields: Multi-purpose	4,002	2	7	- 5
Swimming Pools (outdoor)	26,900	0	1	- 1
Skate Park	35,000	0	0	0
Synthetic Fields: Multi-purpose	23,958	0	1	- 1

10.9 Acres/1,000 Residents = approx. 319 Acres

Devlin Park - 12 acres

Wall Park - 8.8 acres

Vestal Park - 18.4 acres

Potter Park (+ Sarver Park) - 29.8 acres

Vincentian Park - 13.6 acres

Pontiac Park - 2.4 acres

Harmony-Brandt Trail and Memorial Park - 1 acre

Councill Memorial Park - 1.3 acres

Additional Greenspace Parcels (Total) - 123.4 acres

Total Town Owned Acreage - 212 acres

North Park (within Town) - 1,790 acres

## What does this Mean?

As indicated, national averages are merely benchmarks. Each individual community must develop parks, facilities, and recreational programs based upon the needs of their community and as space and geography allow. However, comparing McCandless's current park space and amenities with community's their size around the nation provides information that helps create a feasible Master Plan.

Using the above benchmarks, it is suggested the Town of McCandless considers the inclusion of basketball courts, tennis courts, a swimming pool, and using synthetic turf on its multi-purpose field. These are suggestions as a swimming pool equates high upfront costs and continually high maintenance costs a municipality may not want to take on as a responsibility. But would the option of a spray park be a consideration? Tennis courts are less in use with the growth of pickleball, but which would see more usage within the community? The information above is useful in guiding the Town not to a specific amenity but to asking questions that will guide the Town to the right amenities for its residents.



# Park Planning Process

## 3



### DESIGN & ENGAGEMENT

#### *Where do we want to Be?*

Answering this question is crucial to identifying proposed improvements and facilities, as well as understanding their interrelationships. Hearing what park users envision in their parks ensures the continual and future use of the parks. Opportunities to listen to the public are diverse in order to hear back from as many members of the community as possible. Public events were widely advertised to ensure residents had ample opportunity to participate and provide feedback. The Online Community Questionnaire was highlighted on the Town's social media outlets and community members were encouraged to share the link with their friends.

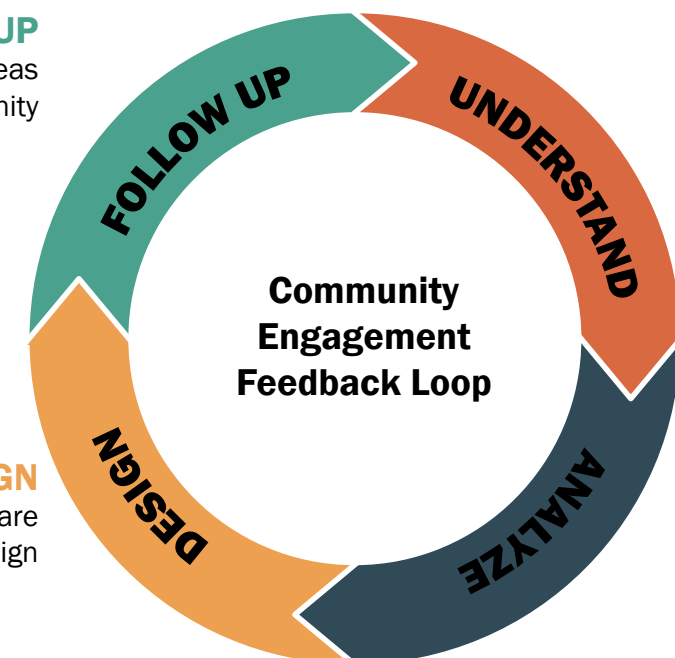
Public engagement is critical in the development of any Park Master Plan. Meaningful participation from park users, recreation program participants, and residents ensures that the plan reflects the community's priorities and vision. To gain a thorough understanding of McCandless residents' and leaders' needs and preferences, five key methods of public input were utilized: Study Committee, Digital Questionnaire, Public Meetings, Focus Groups and Key Person Interviews.

*Meeting minutes, responses to the questionnaire, and key person interview notes are provided in the Appendix for reference.*



**FOLLOW UP**  
Present the design ideas generated to the community

**DESIGN**  
Utilize analysis to prepare park improvement design



**UNDERSTAND**  
Engage with the community to gather information, feedback, and ideas about the park and/or proposed designs

**ANALYZE**  
Analyze and prioritize information collected from community engagement





Study Committee

The 19-member Steering Committee convened with the consulting team five times throughout 2025. The committee was composed of diverse groups of community representatives, including Town Council members, municipal staff, community leaders, and youth and adult sport directors. The Committee played an integral role in guiding the planning process and ensuring meaningful community involvement. Its responsibilities included:

- Assisting in the dissemination of project information to the community.
- Helping to define goals, visions, and long-term objectives for the Town of McCandless Parks and Recreation system.
- Encouraging broader community participation by:
  - » collaborating on the development of a digital community questionnaire.
  - » identifying a diverse group of key stakeholders for one-on-one interviews.
  - » supporting the organization and promotion of public engagement events.
- Serving as a sound board for reviewing draft recommendations and implementation strategies.
- Providing feedback and evaluation to refine and strengthen the final Plan.



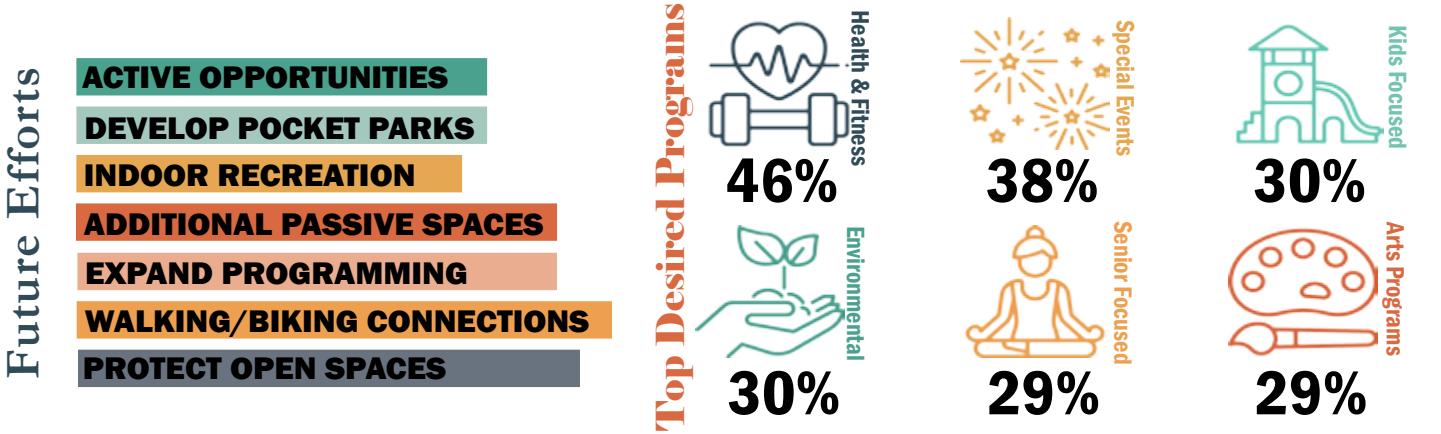
Community Questionnaire

To gather a broad range of opinions, the Study Committee and consultant team developed a digital community questionnaire to gather residents' perspectives on parks, facilities, trails, events, and recreation programs within the Town of McCandless. The survey provided residents an opportunity to share feedback, identify priorities, and offer ideas for future improvements. A total of 810 responses were received, 93% of which were Town residents. Overall, respondents expressed high appreciation for the Town's parks and a strong interest in continued investment in recreation opportunities.

Takeaways

Respondents to the questionnaire show a strong support of the Town's parks and the contribution they make to the health, quality of life, and identity of McCandless. Key themes included:

- **Future Priorities:** Respondents emphasized the importance of protecting open space and natural resources, expanding walking and biking trails, and developing additional passive recreation areas such as meadows, arboretums, and picnic shelters.
- **Program Interests:** The most desired program areas included health and wellness, fitness and exercise, outdoor recreation, nature watching, and special events that serve residents of all ages.
- **Community Identity and Facilities:** Residents expressed a desire for a community gathering place unique to McCandless, improved trail connectivity between parks, and expanded use of existing spaces such as the McCandless - Northern Allegheny Heritage and Cultural Center for broader community programming.



- **Site-Specific Feedback:** Individual parks received detailed input—such as expanding trails at Vestal and Potter Parks, improvements to fields at Devlin Park, addressing parking and signage at Wall and Vincentian, and enhancing Brandt Trail connections. Potter Park, in particular, was described as a potential “jewel in a necklace of parks” linked through an interconnected trail system.
- **Indoor Recreation and Facilities:** Many respondents supported the addition of indoor recreation and fitness spaces, flexible rental and meeting areas, and year-round programming.
- **Communication and Awareness:** Residents most often learn about Town activities through word of mouth and Facebook, though many noted limited awareness of current programs and expressed a desire for improved communication and transparency regarding meetings, projects, and implementation timelines.

Key Person Interviews

The Study Committee developed a list of individuals and organizations within the community for one-on-one interviews with the Consultant Team. These seventeen individuals represented a diverse group of business owners, parks users, and representatives from local sports associations. They were each asked six general questions:

- How do you utilize the parks? What activities do you enjoy in your leisure time?
- What types of programs would you or your family and friends be interested in participating in?
- In terms of available parking facilities, what do you see as the Town of McCandless’s strengths and weaknesses?
- Looking 5–10 years ahead, what one or two specific changes would you most like to see?
- Do you regularly walk or bike in the Town of McCandless? If so, where?
- If the Town invested in developing another park, where in McCandless do you think it should be located?

In addition to these questions, further discussion focused on the individual's area of expertise or specific park interests. These conversations were conducted via telephone and email and yielded invaluable qualitative insights that helped shape the goals, strategies, and recommendations of this Plan.





Takeaways

Consistent themes emerged during the Key Person Interviews that were considered in the development of this Plan and should be returned to as this Plan is implemented:

Community Strengths

- The network of trails that support walking, hiking and outdoor enjoyment.
- Community events such as Community Day, Heritage Days, Winter Fest, and the Speaker Series at the McCandless-Northern Allegheny Heritage and Cultural Center which foster civic pride and connection.
- The growing popularity of pickleball courts and opportunities for social recreation.

Community Aspirations

- Expanded environmental and nature-based programming such as guided hikes, bird-watching activities, nature education events, and outdoor learning opportunities for schools and community groups.
- Greater transparency and communication with residents throughout the planning and implementation process to ensure ongoing engagement and trust.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Expanding the Town's social media and online presence or developing a centralized digital platform to share comprehensive information about parks, amenities, events, and facility rentals.
- Creating a community hub or town center—a welcoming, social space that fosters connection, provides gathering opportunities, and enhances McCandless's overall sense of place.

Key Challenges

- Interest in locating future parks or recreational spaces on previously disturbed or cleared sites—such as the former landfill area near Highland and the Showcase Cinema property—to minimize additional tree removal and preserve existing natural areas.
- It is currently unsafe or uncomfortable to walk or bike within portions of the Town due to limited pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. This lack of connectivity discourages regular walking and cycling for recreation or transportation.
- Better sidewalk and trail connectivity throughout McCandless to provide safer, more direct access between neighborhoods and parks, and to establish a cohesive town-wide recreation network.

Public Events

The leadership in McCandless were very active in moderating the development of this plan. A desire to see this Master Plan align with past plans as well as enhance those past plans were a driving factor among the Town's leaders. To this end, many opportunities were given to discuss, respond, and receive feedback from the public at large.

EAC Clean Up Day - April 12, 2025

The Town of McCandless's Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) annual Spring roadside cleanup offered the perfect opportunity to kick off awareness of the Master Planning process and invite people to respond to the newly launched online questionnaire. This event welcomed community residents to a breakfast and provided them with safety vests, gloves and bags to participate in the roadside cleanup.

Easter Egg Event - April 19, 2025

With over 400 people in attendance, the annual community event was the perfect opportunity to launch one-on-one public engagement with residents, especially those with children who use the parks or programs. A booth was set up with posters of potential park amenities. Both kids and adults were asked about the current parks, amenities and programs - pros and cons. They were also asked to make comments and place dot stickers on park amenities they would like in the McCandless parks.

Public Forum #1 - June 19, 2025

Primarily focused on adults within the community, this forum held at the Town Hall invited attendees to interact with Study Committee members at interactive stations, each focused on a specific park. This allowed the nearly 50 attendees to actively engage in the planning process with questions, written comments on Post-It notes, and back-and-forth transparent conversations.

Potter Park Forum - June 17, 2025

Targeting residents living near Potter Park, the forum focused on the Town's recent acquisition of the additional Maier (Sarver) property and the opportunities for potential park expansion. The purpose of the meeting was two-fold: provide the public with accurate information regarding the acquisition and create an open space for dialogue about concerns, ideas, and expectations of its future use. The meeting started with several attendees expressing frustration that the acquisition could lead to a disruption in their neighborhood and its natural environment. The Town assured residents that any plans developed during the creation of this Master Plan were only possibilities of the future and not meant to impose any permanent or large-scale development. As the meeting progressed, both Town leadership and local residents came to a better understanding of the goals and uses of both Potter Park and the newly acquisitioned property. It was agreed the area would preserve the natural environment of both sites, allowing them to be passive areas of recreation. Attendees were encouraged to remain involved in any future plans for the sites.

Potter Park Visit - August 4, 2025

Following the information forum on Potter Park and the additional Maier property, it was a valuable opportunity to meet the previous owner of the new property and walk its environs with her. During the tour, she shared stories of how her father once cleared the land and created informal trails, memories of spending time by the duck pond, and the distinctive features that define the property—such as the two majestic trees marking the entrance and the remnants of the old barn and family home. Walking the trails and exploring the site together underscored the emotional and historical importance of the land.

PA DCNR Visit - August 27, 2025

Town staff and the Plan consultants met with a professional from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Forestry Division. The visit included tours of Potter Pond, the newly acquired Maier parcel, Wall Park and the Harmony-Brandt Trail. The DCNR representative provided expert insight and technical recommendations to help advance the concept plans for each site. Several members of the Study Committee participated in the visit, contributing to a productive exchange of ideas. Together, the group walked the trails, discussed potential improvements, and identified opportunities to strengthen community





access, ecological health, and long-term stewardship. Following the visit, DCNR compiled detailed observations and supplied follow-up materials, including best-practice resources and guidance. The planning team incorporated these recommendations into the evolving concept plans to ensure that each park reflects principles of sustainability, resilience, and active ecological management, with an emphasis on controlling invasive species and protecting natural ecosystems for future generations.

**McCandless Community Day - September 13, 2025**

Bigger and better than ever, McCandless's Community Day welcomed twice as many visitors as in years past. In the midst of the marching bands, rides, food, and fireworks; a booth was set up to talk to both visitors and residents of McCandless to gain their insights on the community's parks and discuss future amenities and programs. Meaningful conversations with residents included common themes: trail connectivity and safe pedestrian/bicycle routes, a desire for community gathering spaces and the continual balance of places for both passive and active recreation. Other topics heard often included more/better lighting to allow the parks to be used later in the evening, and emphasis on year-round programming that is accessible and affordable for all ages.

**Public Forum #2 - October 9, 2025**

The final of the public events, this forum gave people a final opportunity provided attendees with a "sneak peak" of the draft master plans for each park and gave them opportunity to comment on the future plans. It was attended by over 60 people who interacted with the Study Committee at the interactive stations where they could ask questions, share their comments, and add their own suggestions to the board with Post-It notes. This final, collaborative meeting ensured that public input continued to guide the final stages of the Plan.

**What We Heard**

Throughout the public engagement process, several key activities and facility aspirations were identified by the community. These aspirations reflect the needs and desires of local residents, providing valuable insight into the types of amenities and features that would enhance each park's functionality and appeal. The following lists outline these specific items, which were prioritized based on community feedback and are integral to shaping the future development of the park. These suggestions have been taken into consideration with the final master plans of each park found in Chapter 4.

**Devlin Park**

- Devlin Field: could this be relocated? Fix drainage problems? Turf? Do not move! It is currently the only diamond field with lights that the McCandless Athletic Association has access to.
- Make the creek more accessible for children to play in
- Connections to allow it to be accessible by walking or biking
- Amphitheater
- Pickleball courts: lights are needed and the suggestion they be left open year-round (or at least 9 months and closed only during the peak of winter)

**Wall Park**

- Better signage and trail marking
- Parking needs to be increased
- Utilities would allow for easier maintenance
- Could a playground be added at the end of the Harmony-Brandt Trail near Ingomar?

**Vestal Park**

- Connect the trails within the park and make them accessible to all
- Connect the park to outside neighborhoods, schools, and Potter Park
- Better/more parking
- Baseball facility: renovations to restrooms, concessions, seating areas, batting cages, and electricity to storage shed

**Potter Park**

- Biking and walking trails - could they connect to neighborhoods or other parks?
- Improvements to the access road and parking
- Benches for resting along the trails
- Preserve the natural areas
- Native plant gardens, pollinator habitats
- Educational signage
- Fishing platform
- Maintenance: invasive species should be removed and the pond needs yearly upkeep (and maybe needs to be drained to remove silt buildup and then refilled to restore water quality)

**Vincentian Park**

- Better circulation and drive improvements
- Renovations to the restrooms, concessions, and batting cages - add lighting to the fields
- Signage
- Better playground

**McCandless Parks and Recreation - General Comments**

"Connection" was a catchword heard throughout the questionnaire, key person interviews, and public events. Connecting the parks within themselves (completing trails, better trail markings), connecting the parks with each other, and connecting the parks to neighborhoods and shopping areas. The residents of McCandless desire to make their community more walkable and bikeable. As with many western Pennsylvania communities, this is a challenge the leaders of McCandless will need to consider with creativity in order to overcome the geography and subsequent urban development. Some immediate improvements, however, such as lighted crosswalks or signals would improve current walkable areas. Sidewalk additions or extensions were also mentioned often, especially along West Ingomar Road, Kummer Road, Meinert Road and Highland Road.

Indoor recreation was also mentioned often. Respondents agree that an indoor space could include fitness/health and wellness areas, meeting space, and indoor sports opportunities.



# Recommendations

## 4



### PLANNING FRAMEWORK FOR THE TOWN OF McCANDLESS'S PARKS

As part of the master planning process for the Town's five existing parks and one potential future park, the steering committee and design team collaborated to establish a unified set of goals. These goals were shaped by the committee's vision and by the input gathered through public engagement. They serve as the guiding foundation for all recommendations contained in this plan.

The final concepts for each park reflect these collective priorities. They address current needs, anticipate future demands, and enhance the overall park experience. Community feedback played a central role in shaping the plan and ensured that it responds to the interests of families, older adults, sports users, trail users, and casual visitors alike.

Across the park system, proposed improvements focus on expanding play opportunities, upgrading pavilions and gathering areas, and introducing amenities that support a wide range of recreational activities. At the same time, the plan preserves valuable existing assets—such as open fields, trail networks, and community garden areas. This balanced approach protects well-loved features while welcoming new elements that improve accessibility, usability, and long-term value.

This system-wide planning effort positions the Town of McCandless to meet the recreational needs of both current residents and future generations, while supporting responsible and strategic investment in all park facilities.

#### Opinion of Probable Costs

An opinion of probable construction cost has been prepared for all recommended improvements. These estimates assume projects will be implemented through a public bidding process using the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's 2025 Prevailing Wage Rates. To plan for cost escalation, a 4.5% annual inflation rate is recommended for any work undertaken after 2025.

In Pennsylvania, construction projects exceeding \$25,000 must utilize prevailing wage rates. However, the Town may choose to implement select projects using in-kind services, volunteer labor, or donated materials, which could reduce total costs. Additional funding sources—including state and federal grants—can further offset expenses.

Projected construction costs are organized in by categories to help guide budgeting and implementation.

#### Design Considerations

Ensuring that recreational facilities are appropriately located and accessible to all park visitors is crucial for creating a welcoming and functional space. In addition to accessibility, it is essential that all facilities be designed and situated in alignment with established standards and guidelines. This approach not only enhances the overall user experience but also helps minimize potential liability for the Town. The following is a summary of the relevant standards and guidelines that apply to both the existing facilities within McCandless's parks







and those being proposed in the Master Plans. These guidelines ensure that the developments in each park adhere to best practices in safety, accessibility, and usability, providing a well-designed and secure environment for all users.

ADA Accessibility

Ensuring accessibility to all facilities not only accommodates those with disabilities, but also makes it easier for the general public to use the facilities. It is imperative that the Town take steps to provide accessibility for all park users.

Accessibility, in design terms, is described by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities to participate in the mainstream of public life. To do so, the ADA sets requirements for facilities to prevent physical barriers that keep people with disabilities from participating. When recreational facilities are built or altered, they must comply with the ADA standards by providing an accessible route to the area of use and spectator areas. With regards to complying with ADA, the following standards and guidelines must be taken into consideration:

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title II Requirement for Public Facilities, [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)
- Americans with Disabilities Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities, Play Areas, Finale Rule, [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov) - establishes requirements for playground equipment accessibility.
- Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board’s “Regulatory Negotiation Committee on Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas”, September 1999, [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov) - sets minimum requirements for accessible trails, access routes, resting opportunities, benches, utility

Playground Standards & Guidelines

- Consumer Product Safety Commission’s “Handbook for Public Playground Safety” – establishes recommendations for equipment, use zones, and protective safety surfacing..
- American Society of Testing Materials “Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Public Playground Safety” (ASTM F 1487) - establishes access route, equipment, use zone, and protective safety surfacing requirements.
- American Society of Testing Materials “Standard Specification for Determination of Accessibility of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment” (ASTM F 1951) - defines minimum requirements for accessible protective surfacing materials.
- American Society of Testing Materials “Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment” (ASTM F 1292) - defines minimum requirements for impact attenuation of protective surfacing materials.

Recreation, Athletic & Sports Facility Standards

Additionally, facilities should comply with specific standards established for their respective activity. Sports facility standards that must be understood in order to

properly locate the facilities being considered in this study include:

- National Recreation and Park Association’s “Facility Development Standards” - establishes facility dimensions, orientation, and slope requirements.

Adjacencies

In addition to adhering to the required standards and guidelines, careful consideration must be given to the spatial relationships between different facilities within the parks. It is important to ensure that facilities are appropriately located in proximity to one another to minimize conflicts and maximize their utility. Ideally, facilities should be positioned next to one another only when their functions complement each other and have minimal impact on adjacent areas. For example, it is not advisable to place a playground directly next to a basketball court due to the noise and activity levels, which could interfere with the intended experience of both spaces.

On the other hand, some adjacencies are more suitable. For instance, a basketball court and a tennis court can be positioned next to each other as both are active, high-energy facilities that cater to similar user groups.

During the development of the concepts and the Master Plan, the consultant has carefully considered these principles of facility adjacency. The placement of each facility is strategically planned to ensure functionality, safety, and an optimal user experience, while also taking into account the potential impact each facility may have on the others.

Park Sustainability Guidelines

Designing parks that are sustainable is vital to not only protecting the natural resources in the park today but providing future protection as well. “Creating Sustainable Community Parks and Landscapes, 2nd Edition”, published by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) in 2010, provides valuable recommendations regarding how to implement sustainable practices into design, maintenance, and operations of parks across the Commonwealth. The guide can be obtained from <https://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=1736558&DocName=2nd-edition-final-with-hyperlinks.pdf>

These practices are based on the following principals:

- Retain as much of the pre-existing landscape as possible during new construction, including the soil, rocks, native vegetation, wetlands, and contours. This will minimize disturbances, which can open up an area to invasive species. It can also keep costs down, as fewer new plants, soil amendments, and habitat enhancements will be needed.
- Maintain high quality soils that will hold water and supply plants with proper nutrients. During construction, leave as much existing topsoil as possible. When new soil is brought in, ensure that it is certified weed free, in order to prevent the spread of new invasive species. Using compost and other natural products for mulch and fertilizer will help enhance the soil and feed the native plants. Good quality soil will reduce the need for fertilizers and supplemental watering.
- Connect new landscape components with the surrounding native vegetation to create larger contiguous areas of habitat. Many wildlife species need large ranges to find adequate food, mates, and shelter. By reducing the amount of roads, parking lots, and turf areas, or by placing these together, habitat quality will be enhanced.



- Create natural storm water management systems and other green infrastructure, such as rain gardens and swales of native grasses. These systems help to minimize downstream flooding, recharge and filter groundwater, and are more cost-effective and environmentally-sound than man-made systems of pipes and storage tanks.
- Use integrated pest management (IPM) strategies to minimize the use of chemical pesticides to control plant and insect pests. IPM is an ecologically-based approach to pest control that helps maintain strong and healthy plants. IPM can include the use of traps, sterile male pests, and quarantines.
- Minimize impermeable surfaces like roads, parking lots, and paved trails. Consider replacing asphalt and concrete with permeable pavement, mulch paths, gravel lots, and native vegetation. Permeable surfaces help to recharge ground water, reduce erosion, lessen flooding events, and filter out pollutants. When impermeable surfaces must be used, arrange them in an area where they will not fragment habitat, make them as small in area as possible, and keep them away from water bodies.
- Reduce turf to only those areas essential for recreational and other human use activities. Turf offers little habitat benefit and is not as effective as many native plants in pollution filtration, flood prevention, and erosion control. In addition, turf maintenance can have negative impacts on the surrounding environment and can require lots of mowing, watering, and fertilizing. Replace non-native turf grasses with native warm season grasses, which, once they are established, have lower maintenance needs.
- Use native plants in riparian buffers around any surface water body, including wetlands. Riparian buffers help to filter pollutants before they reach water bodies, and the vegetation discourages nuisance geese from staying in the area. Roots from riparian vegetation also prevent erosion of soils into the water body and minimize flooding events. Shade from these buffers acts as a temperature control for the water body, which enhances habitat value for aquatic organisms. The food and shelter values of these buffers also enhances habitat. In addition, by selecting the right kinds of plants, the scenic views of the water bodies can be enhanced.
- Identify and remove invasive plant species whenever possible. Invasive plants have a number of detrimental effects on natural habitats. Most invasive plants grow so densely and spread so rapidly that native vegetation is choked out.

Opportunities for sustainable park design for include permeable paving, rain gardens, native species, removing invasive species, and reducing the amount of turf, to name a few.

Security Analysis

Parks should be places of safety and security. The Town should take both equipment safety (safe bleachers, playgrounds, sidewalks, etc.), overall safety (lighting, cleanliness, signage, etc.) and security (cameras, police call boxes, etc.) seriously. More people will play, walk, and attend events in parks they consider safe and secure.

Many altercations can be avoided by simple things such as proper etiquette among user groups within the parks (baseball teams, fitness groups, etc.) which should be laid out within the user agreements and then enforced. Signage indicating children and young people should be accompanied by an adult, as well as proper enforcement of this rule, is also valuable.

A common approach to enhancing park safety is to improve visibility. This can be challenging due to the site’s topography. Many areas of a park can be obstructed from

view by steep vegetated slopes. To mitigate this, selective tree pruning and removal can be implemented to improve visibility. Trees should be pruned to ensure a minimum of 10 feet of clearance beneath the canopy, allowing for better sightlines. In areas where dense tree coverage limits visibility, carefully removing some trees can help open up the space and provide clearer views. On trails, signage requesting that users stay on the trail can also be helpful.

Another strategy for general park safety is to integrated central placement of a park’s most used facility. This is often the playground or a sports court. By locating these amenities in the heart of the park, it naturally attracts more activity and increases the number of people in that area. This heightened activity creates more “eyes on the park,” which helps deter undesirable behavior. Additionally, amenities situated along the park’s perimeter can make them visible to nearby residents who can monitor and report any concerns.

To further enhance security, parks should feature improved lighting and security cameras. These elements will help ensure that the park remains a safe environment for all users, particularly during evening hours or times when the park may be less populated.

A discussion with local law enforcement concerning the safey and security of each park will be valuable to the Town as safety measures are implemented.

Lighting Considerations for Park and Field Facilities

Research from astrophysics and environmental lighting specialists indicates that artificial light at night produces significant ecological and public health effects. Light pollution contributes to sky glow, reducing night sky visibility and impacting stargazing and astronomy-related tourism. Wildlife—including migratory birds, insects, and pollinators—is particularly sensitive to nighttime illumination; artificial light can disrupt navigation, feeding behavior, reproductive cycles, and plant growth patterns. Additionally, excessive or poorly directed light is associated with negative human health outcomes, particularly concerning sleep disruption.

Communities that have successfully balanced recreation needs with ecological protection have implemented the Five Principles of Responsible Outdoor Lighting:

- Use lighting only where and when needed.
- Direct illumination precisely to intended areas.
- Maintain illumination levels at the lowest effective amount.
- Control lights to limit unnecessary operation.
- Employ warm-colored lighting to minimize blue-rich emissions.

Light Pollution, Measurement, and Color Temperature

The cumulative upward illumination from outdoor lighting—known as sky glow—can be evaluated through methods such as the Naked Eye Limiting Magnitude (NELM), sky quality meters, and regional light pollution atlases. Light color temperature also influences environmental impact; cooler, blue-rich LEDs produce more sky glow and carry greater ecological disruption potential. Warm-colored lighting and amber-spectrum LEDs are strongly recommended and align with DarkSky-approved standards.





Field and Facility Lighting Technology

Advancements in sports lighting highlight the importance of minimizing spill light, glare, and uneven lighting conditions. Modern LED systems offer improved uniformity, lower energy consumption, and instant on/off capability compared to older HID and halide technologies. However, LED systems vary significantly in performance. Key considerations for municipal installations include:

- Overall light levels and playability standards.
- Glare and spill control, particularly toward adjacent neighborhoods.
- Energy efficiency and long-term operational costs.
- System uniformity to ensure player safety.
- Warranty coverage, service agreements, and maintenance provisions.

Annual inspections by qualified professionals are recommended to confirm compliance with lighting, structural, and electrical standards.

Infrastructure, Materials and System Integration

Appropriate pole and foundation selection ensures long-term structural stability and reduced maintenance needs. While options range from wood to galvanized steel and concrete products, foundations combining concrete bases with galvanized steel poles provide superior durability. Municipalities should consider integrated lighting systems rather than assembling components from multiple manufacturers to ensure compatibility, performance reliability, and simplified maintenance.

Remote lighting management systems—such as MUSCO’s Control Link—enable efficient scheduling, remote operation, proactive monitoring, and reduced staff burden.

Responsible Lighting Practices and Community Compatibility

Responsible lighting practices prioritize:

- Player and visitor safety.
- Environmental sustainability and wildlife protection.
- Night sky preservation and reduction of nuisance lighting.
- Positive neighborhood relations.
- Long-term cost management and system reliability.

DarkSky-approved lighting products and practices offer the highest standard for reducing light pollution, improving play conditions, and supporting environmental goals. Each park within the Town of McCandless will require site-specific assessment to ensure lighting solutions are appropriate to the unique context, surrounding neighborhood, and ecological conditions.

Tree Species Selection

Tree selection for Town of McCandless parks should prioritize native species with high ecological value, strong climate resilience, and the ability to provide shade, cooling, and habitat. The recommended species are organized by canopy class to guide placement within park landscapes, trails, riparian areas, and open spaces.

Medium to Large Trees  
30 - 50 feet

Suitable for general park plantings, pathways, and lawn areas where moderate shade and seasonal color are desired.

Red Maple (Acer rubrum)

- Brilliant red fall foliage; adaptable to diverse soils.
- Early flowers support pollinators; seeds support wildlife; widely used shade tree.

Sugar Maple (Acer saccharum)

- Classic canopy tree known for gold fall color and dense shade.
- Prefers well-drained soils; provides seeds, buds, and cover for wildlife.

Tulip Poplar (Liriodendron tulipifera)

- One of the tallest eastern hardwoods with tulip-shaped leaves and flowers.
- Nectar-rich blooms benefit pollinators; fast-growing and visually striking.

Shagbark Hickory (Carya ovata)

- Recognizable shaggy bark; produces hard nuts favored by wildlife.
- Provides nesting habitat and adds unique texture to park landscapes.

Black Gum (Nyssa sylvatica)

- Glossy leaves with exceptional fall color (red, purple, orange).
- Produces dark blue fruits for birds; valuable habitat and seasonal interest.

Large Shade/Canopy Trees  
50 - 80 feet

These species provide long-term canopy cover, significant cooling benefits, and high wildlife value.

White Oak (Quercus alba)

- Large, long-lived hardwood with scaly light-gray bark and rounded lobed leaves; a keystone species in PA.
- Produces abundant acorns that support a wide range of wildlife; excellent shade and habitat provider.

Northern Red Oak (Quercus rubra)

- Fast-growing, tall oak with distinctive ridged bark (“ski tracks”).
- Produces large acorns every 2–5 years; provides strong nesting cover and wildlife habitat.

American Beech (Fagus grandifolia)

- Smooth, silver-gray bark and dense foliage that persists on young branches into winter.
- Produces triangular nuts favored by wildlife; long-lived (200+ years) with broad, shade-giving crowns.

American Basswood (Tilia americana)

- Straight-trunked tree with a broad crown and large, heart-shaped leaves.
- Highly valuable to pollinators due to fragrant summer flowers; provides seeds, buds, and habitat for park wildlife.

Eastern White Pine (Pinus strobus)

- Tall evergreen with soft needles; provides year-round cover and winter habitat.
- Fast-growing, adaptable, and effective for windbreaks and evergreen structure in parks.

Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus)

(Note: often listed as Platanus occidentalis in PA)

- Massive tree with distinctive peeling multicolored bark and broad leaves.
- Tolerant of wet soils; ideal for riverbanks, open spaces, and large shade areas.

Evergreen and Partial Evergreens

Provide year-round structure, screening, wildlife cover, and winter habitat.

Eastern Red Cedar (Juniperus virginiana)

- Dense, hardy evergreen suitable for windbreaks and screens.
- Berries feed many bird species; drought-tolerant and adaptable.

Eastern Hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)

- Shade-loving evergreen with soft, layered needles.
- Provides shelter for birds and mammals; ideal for cool, moist areas.

Small/Understory Trees  
20 - 35 feet

Important for layered habitat, shaded trails, and ornamental value beneath larger canopy species.

Eastern Redbud (Cercis canadensis)

- Early pink-purple blossoms; seeds support birds and small mammals.
- Strong ornamental and understory value.

Flowering Dogwood (Cornus florida)

- Iconic white or pink spring blooms; red berries support many bird species.
- Effective in shaded or partially shaded park environments.

Serviceberry (Amelanchier spp.)

- Multi-season interest with spring flowers, edible berries, and fall color.
- Highly valuable for birds, pollinators, and small mammals.

Hop Hornbeam (Ostrya virginiana)

- Hardy small-to-medium tree with hop-like seed clusters.
- Performs well in shade or drier soils; provides texture and habitat.

Sassafras (Sassafras albidum)

- Known for aromatic bark and mitten-shaped leaves.
- Supports butterflies and birds; adds unique visual character.

Wet, Riparian, or Moist Low-Area Trees

Recommended for streambanks, stormwater basins, wet meadows, and flood-prone zones.

River Birch (Betula nigra)

- Multi-trunk form with peeling cinnamon-colored bark.
- Thrives in wet soils; supports birds and small mammals; adds texture to waterfront areas.

Swamp White Oak (Quercus bicolor)

- Water-tolerant oak with rounded leaves and broad crown.
- Provides acorns and nesting habitat; ideal for rain gardens, pond edges, and low-lying areas.

Willows (Salix spp.)

- Graceful habit with drooping branches; strong root systems stabilize banks.
- Valuable for riparian habitat and shade along ponds and streams.



Native Plantings

In addition to beautiful trees, native plantings add appeal to parks spaces. The PA DCNR provides extensive resources for finding the best native plants for every area of space, from wet and shady to dry and sunny: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dcnr/conservation/wild-plants/landscaping-with-native-plants>

Signage and Wayfinding

McCandless has much to offer. Beautiful parks, great neighborhoods, the best school district, shopping, and easy access to the City of Pittsburgh. Promoting McCandless is creating a place people talk about, desire to visit, and even want to move to.

Branding for a community is a promise a place makes to people to reinforce the core values and identify the community parks, recreation assets, and programming.

McCandless can strategically use communications to reinforce an identity and image for its parks and recreation. Visually, all messaging and communications should incorporate at least some elements of the color palette and logo the Town chooses to adopt. This includes digital and print.

Developing signage which incorporates the Parks and Recreation Department’s logo and is consistent throughout the Town provides a visual connection for both residents and visitors. Incorporating QR codes with information about the park gives an opportunity for comments, or directions to other parks or local businesses helps to boost the local economy.

General Amenities

As each park undergoes updates, there are a range of standard park amenities that can be placed throughout the properties, including strategically placed trash receptacles, benches, and other essential facilities to enhance the park’s accessibility and user experience. To promote safety and security, the parks should be equipped with lighting and security cameras, ensuring a well-lit and monitored environment for visitors. Additionally, water fountains should be installed in key locations (near sports courts or playgrounds), offering convenient access for park-goers in high activity areas of the parks. Cohesive signage including entrance signs, trail markers and parking signage should also be considered throughout the park system.





# Devlin Park

Devlin Park is the Town’s largest and most highly used park, offering a wide range of recreational amenities including basketball, pickleball, and tennis courts, a baseball field, a playground, and a pavilion. Public engagement responses consistently rated the park as “excellent” or “good,” reflecting strong maintenance practices and the overall quality and safety of the amenities.

### IDENTIFIED NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

Despite the positive feedback, several areas for improvement were noted. Users expressed interest in:

- Upgrading or potentially removing the existing baseball field.
- Improved access to the creek for children and passive play.
- Trail connections that would enable walking or biking access to the park.
- Opportunities for year-round or extended seasonal use of park amenities.

Two conceptual design options were developed to respond to these priorities and to identify opportunities to enhance the park’s functionality and user experience.

### CONCEPT A

Concept A focuses on the introduction of a synthetic turf multi-purpose field suitable for sports such as soccer and lacrosse. Improvements associated with this feature include expanded parking and accessible walkways to support increased activity. A restroom and concession building is also proposed adjacent to the fields.

Additional changes include:

- Upgrading the parking layout and providing fully accessible routes to all amenities.
- Replacing the underused sand volleyball court with an open lawn to support a mix of passive and active recreation.
- Removing the baseball field and constructing a four-seasons pavilion to accommodate community events throughout much of the year.
- Enhancing the park landscape with new signage, meadows, and tree plantings.
- Adding safe pedestrian crossings at Grubbs Road and Ingomar Road to improve access and visibility.

### Concept A Cost Estimate

Item Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
Removals and Site Preparation				
Erosion and sedimentation controls	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000
Clearing and grubbing	1.50	AC	\$6,000	\$ 9,000
Remove volleyball courts	25	SY	\$25	\$ 625
Earthwork	5,000	CY	\$16	\$ 80,000
Removals and Site Preparation				\$104,625
Hardscape				
Accessible parking - asphalt	440	SY	\$90	\$ 39,600
Parking lot and drive - asphalt	1,100	SY	\$90	\$ 99,000
Parking striping	1	LS	\$800	\$ 800
Wheel stops	11	EA	\$250	\$ 2,750
Crosswalk striping	2	LS	\$500	\$ 1,000
Accessible ramps	10	SY	\$150	\$ 1,500
Accessible trail - 10' asphalt	150	SY	\$150	\$ 22,500
Sidewalks - 6' concrete	150	SY	\$150	\$ 22,500
Hardscape				\$189,650
Site Improvements and Amenities				
Vehicular regulatory signs	8	EA	\$350	\$ 2,800
Wayfinding signs	2	EA	\$250	\$ 500
Crosswalk signs	4	EA	\$250	\$ 1,000
Gateway sign	1	ALLOW	\$10,000	\$ 10,000
Synthetic turf athletic fields	76,000	SF	\$9	\$ 684,000
Accessible bleachers	6	EA	\$25,000	\$ 150,000
Rain garden soil	300	CY	\$80	\$ 24,000
Site Improvements and Amenities				\$872,300
Architectural Features				
4-season pavilion with kitchen and restrooms - 70'x50'	1	ALLOW	\$1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000
Restrooms remodel	1	ALLOW	\$50,000	\$ 50,000
Concessions and restrooms	1	ALLOW	\$350,000	\$ 350,000
Architectural Features				\$1,900,000
Utilities				
Light poles for parking lot	4	EA	\$9,000	\$ 36,000
Field lighting	4	EA	\$20,000	\$ 80,000
Electrical trenching, conduit, and wire	2,000	LF	\$30	\$ 60,000
Misc Electrical	1	EA	\$50,000	\$ 50,000
Water lines	550	LF	\$60	\$ 33,000
Sanitary lines	550	LF	\$95	\$ 52,250
Utility tap ins	2	ALLOW	\$15,000	\$ 30,000
Underdrains - 4"	150	LF	\$65	\$ 9,750
Stormwater piping - 18"	120	LF	\$120	\$ 14,400
Stormwater structures for rain gardens	2	EA	\$8,000	\$ 16,000
Utilities				\$381,400
Plantings				
Rain garden seeding	3,500	SF	\$1	\$ 3,500
Meadow seeding	55,000	SF	\$1	\$ 55,000
Trees	37	EA	\$900	\$ 33,300
Riparian buffer	136,000	SF	\$2	\$ 272,000
Plantings				\$363,800
Construction Cost				\$3,811,775
General Conditions			8%	\$ 304,942
			Subtotal	\$4,116,717
GC Overhead & Profit			10%	\$ 411,672
			Subtotal	\$4,528,389
Contingency			15%	\$679,258
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS				\$5,207,647

Opinion of Probable Construction Costs is made based on the experience and qualifications of Pashek + MTR, Ltd and represents reasonable judgment based on familiarity with the industry. Pashek + MTR, Ltd. has no control over the cost, or availability of labor, materials or equipment, or over market conditions or the provider’s method of pricing. Pashek + MTR, Ltd cannot and does not guarantee that the opinion of probable cost provided the Owner will not vary from the actual cost experienced by the Owner.



TOWN OF MCCANDLESS ALLEGHENY COUNTY  
MASTER SITE PLAN, DEVLIN PARK, 23 ACRES - OPTION A

PASHEK MTR  
December 2025



- KEY
- PARK BOUNDARY
- #

 EXISTING
- #

 PROPOSED
- PROPOSED
- EXISTING
- EXISTING WATER PASSAGE

- LEGEND
- 1

 Department of Public Works Salt Dome
- 2

 McCandless Public Works
- 3

 McCandless Town Hall
- 4

 Tennis Courts
- 5

 Bridge
- 6

 Devlin Memorial Pavilion
- 7

 Basketball Court
- 8

 Baseball Field
- 9

 McCandless Northern Allegheny Heritage and Cultural Center
- 10

 Playground
- 11

 UPMC Fitness Court
- 12

 Pickleball Courts (4)
- 13

 Accessible Parking
- 14

 Remove Sand Volleyball Court/ Open Lawn Area
- 15

 Four Seasons Pavilion
  - Community rental oppurtunity
  - Accessible
  - Kitchennette
  - Multi-use for community events
- 16

 Wayfinding Signage
- 17

 Riparian Buffer Planting
- 18

 Synthetic Turf Multi-Purpose Field
- 19

 Accessible Bleachers
- 20

 Concession & Restroom Facility
- 21

 Accessible Path
- 22

 Meadow
- 23

 Gateway Sign
- 24

 Street Trees
- 25

 Pedestian/Biking Crosswalk with Signage
- 26

 Existing Rain Gardens



THIS PROJECT IS PARTIALLY FUNDED THROUGH THE PA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



# Devlin Park

## CONCEPT B

Concept B includes many of the same site-wide improvements as Concept A—such as updated signage, meadows, tree plantings, and safer roadway crossings—but differs in its approach to recreation amenities.

In this concept:

- The baseball field remains, with recommended improvements to enhance safety and playability.
- The synthetic turf multi-purpose field is smaller than in Concept A.
- A new Activity Building is proposed in place of the larger field complex, providing opportunities for indoor programming.
- Additional accessible parking would still be required, though fewer accessible walkways would be necessary compared to Concept A.
- The restroom and concession facility included in Concept A would not be needed under this layout.
- The sand volleyball court is again proposed for removal, with parking upgrades similar to Concept A.
- This option preserves more open greenspace within the park.

## PROGRAMMING & YEAR-ROUND USE

Both concepts introduce amenities that could expand programming opportunities and generate additional revenue for the Town. Extending the usable seasons for key facilities should be considered as part of long-term operations planning.



## Recommendations

## Concept B Cost Estimate

Item Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
<i>Removals and Site Preparation</i>				
Erosion and sedimentation controls	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000
Clearing and grubbing	2.25	AC	\$6,000	\$ 13,500
Remove volleyball courts	25	SY	\$25	\$ 625
Earthwork	4,000	CY	\$16	\$ 64,000
<i>Removals and Site Preparation</i>				\$93,125
<i>Hardscape</i>				
Accessible parking - asphalt	440	SY	\$90	\$ 39,600
Parking lot and drive - asphalt	1,200	SY	\$90	\$ 108,000
Parking striping	1	LS	\$1,000	\$ 1,000
Wheel stops	13	EA	\$250	\$ 3,250
Crosswalk striping	2	LS	\$500	\$ 1,000
Accessible ramps	10	SY	\$150	\$ 1,500
Sidewalks - 6' concrete	120	SY	\$150	\$ 18,000
<i>Hardscape</i>				\$172,350
<i>Site Improvements and Amenities</i>				
Vehicular regulatory signs	8	EA	\$350	\$ 2,800
Wayfinding signs	2	EA	\$250	\$ 500
Crosswalk signs	4	EA	\$250	\$ 1,000
Gateway sign	1	ALLOW	\$10,000	\$ 10,000
Synthetic turf athletic fields	27,000	SF	\$9	\$ 243,000
Accessible bleachers	2	EA	\$25,000	\$ 50,000
Rain garden soil	260	CY	\$80	\$ 20,800
<i>Site Improvements and Amenities</i>				\$328,100
<i>Architectural Features</i>				
Recreation building with restrooms and kitchen	1	ALLOW	\$2,000,000	\$ 2,000,000
Restroom remodel	1	ALLOW	\$50,000	\$ 50,000
<i>Architectural Features</i>				\$2,050,000
<i>Utilities</i>				
Light poles for parking lot	4	EA	\$9,000	\$ 36,000
Field lighting	2	EA	\$20,000	\$ 40,000
Electrical trenching, conduit, and wire	1,200	LF	\$30	\$ 36,000
Misc Electrical	1	EA	\$30,000	\$ 30,000
Water lines	150	LF	\$60	\$ 9,000
Sanitary lines	150	LF	\$95	\$ 14,250
Utility tap ins	1	ALLOW	\$15,000	\$ 15,000
Underdrains - 4"	200	LF	\$65	\$ 13,000
Stormwater piping - 18"	120	LF	\$120	\$ 14,400
Stormwater structures for rain gardens	2	EA	\$8,000	\$ 16,000
<i>Utilities</i>				\$223,650
<i>Plantings</i>				
Rain garden seeding	3,500	SF	\$1	\$ 3,500
Meadow seeding	79,000	SF	\$1	\$ 79,000
Trees	55	EA	\$900	\$ 49,500
Riparian buffer	136,000	SF	\$2	\$ 272,000
<i>Plantings</i>				\$404,000
<i>Construction Cost</i>				\$3,271,225
<i>General Conditions</i>			8%	\$ 261,698
			<i>Subtotal</i>	\$3,532,923
<i>GC Overhead &amp; Profit</i>			10%	\$ 353,292
			<i>Subtotal</i>	\$3,886,215
<i>Contingency</i>			15%	\$582,932
<i>TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS</i>				\$4,469,148

Opinion of Probable Construction Costs is made based on the experience and qualifications of Pashek + MTR, Ltd and represents reasonable judgment based on familiarity with the industry. Pashek + MTR, Ltd. has no control over the cost, or availability of labor, materials or equipment, or over market conditions or the provider's method of pricing. Pashek + MTR, Ltd cannot and does not guarantee that the opinion of probable cost provided the Owner will not vary from the actual cost experienced by the Owner.



TOWN OF MCCANDLESS ALLEGHENY COUNTY  
MASTER SITE PLAN, DEVLIN PARK, 23 ACRES - OPTION B

PASHEK MTR

December 2025



KEY

- PARK BOUNDARY
- # EXISTING
- # PROPOSED
- PROPOSED
- EXISTING
- EXISTING WATER PASSAGE

LEGEND

- 1 Department of Public Works Salt Dome
- 2 McCandless Public Works
- 3 McCandless Town Hall
- 4 Tennis Courts
- 5 Bridge
- 6 Devlin Memorial Pavilion
- 7 Basketball Court
- 8 Baseball Field
- 9 McCandless Northern Allegheny Heritage and Cultural Center
- 10 Playground
- 11 UPMC Fitness Court
- 12 Pickleball Courts (4)
- 13 Accessible Parking
- 14 Remove Sand Volleyball Court/ Open Lawn Area
- 15 Wayfinding Signage
- 16 Riparian Buffer Planting
- 17 Synthetic Turf Multi-Purpose Field
- 18 Accessible Bleachers
- 19 Activity Building
- 20 Meadow
- 21 Gateway Sign
- 22 Street Trees
- 23 Accessible Bleacher Pathway
- 24 Pedestian/Biking Crosswalk with Signage
- 25 Existing Rain Garden



THIS PROJECT IS PARTIALLY FUNDED THROUGH THE PA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



# Wall Park

Wall Park is the smallest of the Town’s parks but remains an active and important recreation site, serving baseball, tennis, playground, and community use. Public input characterized the park as safe, clean, and functional. The primary concern identified was inadequate parking during periods of high activity, particularly when the ballfields are in use.

### PARKING & SITE ACCESS

The proposed concept for Wall Park addresses parking as a priority. The plan includes an expansion of the existing lot, with the option of incorporating green parking elements to manage stormwater and reduce surface heat. Improvements to the current parking area would also increase accessibility and improve internal circulation.

### TRAIL CONNECTIVITY

Strengthening the park’s connections to nearby neighborhoods and the larger trail network is a key component of the plan. Two new trail links are proposed: one extending north to Brandt Trail and another connecting northwest to the Borough of Franklin Park. These improvements would provide additional options for non-vehicular access and enhance overall connectivity within the community.

### RECREATION AMENITIES

Several updates are recommended to broaden recreational opportunities at the park and support existing users. Proposed additions include:

- A regulation-size basketball court
- Temporary pickleball courts
- Swings added to the existing playground
- Shaded outdoor seating near the pavilion

These amenities respond directly to feedback received during the public engagement process.

### BALLFIELD IMPROVEMENTS

Upgrades to the baseball facilities are recommended to address safety concerns and reduce maintenance demands. The removal of the grass infield would create a safer and more manageable playing surface. Additional enhancements, such as batting cages, a small storage area with electrical service, and accessible walkways and bleachers, would improve user experience for both players and spectators.

### LANDSCAPE & PARK CHARACTER

Consistent with recommendations for other Town parks, improvements to signage, shade, and ecological buffers are advised. The use of native plantings, particularly in riparian areas, would strengthen environmental functions and enhance the overall appearance of the park.

## Concept Cost Estimate

Item Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
Removals and Site Preparation				
Erosion and sedimentation controls	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000
Clearing and grubbing	1.00	AC	\$6,000	\$ 6,000
Remove infields	1.50	AC	\$6,000	\$ 9,000
Earthwork	1,400	CY	\$16	\$ 22,400
Removals and Site Preparation				\$52,400
Hardscape				
Milling and overlay existing parking	2,400	SY	\$50	\$ 120,000
Accessible parking - asphalt	200	SY	\$90	\$ 18,000
Parking striping	1	LS	\$800	\$ 800
Wheel stops	6	EA	\$250	\$ 1,500
Green parking	750	SY	\$80	\$ 60,000
Basketball court paving	650	SY	\$70	\$ 45,500
Basketball court painting	1	LS	\$20,000	\$ 20,000
Pickleball court paving	600	SY	\$70	\$ 42,000
Pickleball court painting	1	LS	\$18,000	\$ 18,000
Crosswalk striping	2	LS	\$500	\$ 1,000
Accessible trail - 10' asphalt	550	SY	\$150	\$ 82,500
Sidewalks - 6' concrete	700	SY	\$150	\$ 105,000
Swing set surfacing	850	SF	\$30	\$ 25,500
Hardscape				\$539,800
Site Improvements and Amenities				
Trail kiosk	1	ALLOW	\$6,500	\$ 6,500
Crosswalk signs	2	EA	\$250	\$ 500
Vehicular regulatory signs	6	EA	\$350	\$ 2,100
Basketball hoops	2	EA	\$4,000	\$ 8,000
Pickleball nets	2	EA	\$2,000	\$ 4,000
Players benches	3	EA	\$2,000	\$ 6,000
Accessible bleachers	3	EA	\$25,000	\$ 75,000
Swing set structure	1	ALLOW	\$20,000	\$ 20,000
Tables with umbrellas	10	EA	\$3,500	\$ 35,000
Batting cages	2	ALLOW	\$20,000	\$ 40,000
Rain garden soil	300	CY	\$80	\$ 24,000
Site Improvements and Amenities				\$221,100
Utilities				
Lighting for basketball court	2	EA	\$20,000	\$ 40,000
Lighting for pickleball court	2	EA	\$20,000	\$ 40,000
Electrical trenching, conduit, and wire	9,000	LF	\$30	\$ 270,000
Misc Electrical	1	EA	\$15,000	\$ 15,000
Underdrains - 4"	300	LF	\$65	\$ 19,500
Stormwater piping - 18"	200	LF	\$120	\$ 24,000
Stormwater structures for rain gardens	4	EA	\$8,000	\$ 32,000
Utilities				\$440,500
Plantings				
Rain garden seeding	4,000	SF	\$1	\$ 4,000
Infield seeding	54,000	SF	\$1	\$ 54,000
Trees	21	EA	\$900	\$ 18,900
Riparian buffer	28,000	SF	\$2	\$ 56,000
Seeding - lawn	7,000	SF	\$0.25	\$ 1,750
Plantings				\$134,650
Construction Cost				\$1,388,450
General Conditions			8%	\$ 111,076
			Subtotal	\$1,499,526
GC Overhead & Profit			10%	\$ 149,953
			Subtotal	\$1,649,479
Contingency			15%	\$247,422
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS				\$1,896,900

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TOWN OF MCCANDLESS ALLEGHENY COUNTY  
MASTER SITE PLAN, WALL PARK, 77.56 ACRES

PASHEK MTR  
December 2025



KEY

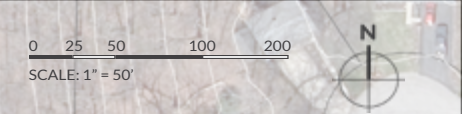
- PARK BOUNDARY
- EXISTING
- PROPOSED
- PROPOSED

LEGEND

- 1 Playground
- 2 Parking Lot (24 Spots)
- 3 Baseball Field
- 4 Pavilion
- 5 Tennis Courts (2)
- 6 Trees
- 7 Regulation Sized Basketball Court
- 8 Swings added to Existing Playground
- 9 Lawn Seating with Shade
- 10 Batting Cage with Storage Shed & Electricity
- 11 Harmony-Brandt Trail Head Signage
- 12 Pickleball Courts (temporary) (2)
- 13 Accessible Parking (6 spots)
- 14 Riparian Buffer w/ native plantings
- 15 Removal of Grass Infields
  - Currently a safety hazard/high maintenace costs
- 16 Accessible Pathway
- 17 Accessible Bleachers/Dugout (6)
- 18 Green Parking (36 Spots)
  - Permeable surface
  - Reduces urban heat island effect



- 18 Old Orchard Park Connection
- 19 Harmony-Brandt Trail Connection
- 20 Pedestrian Crosswalk



THIS PROJECT IS PARTIALLY FUNDED THROUGH THE PA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



# Vestal Park

Vestal Park has served as a long-standing location for baseball in the Town of McCandless with generations of residents using its well-established fields. While users consistently view the park as a strong destination for baseball, it receives fewer visits from those not participating in organized sports. The park, however, includes a substantial amount of natural open space, mature trees, and wetland areas that remain underused.

### IDENTIFIED NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

Public input highlighted two primary needs at Vestal Park:

- Improved connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods and nearby parks.
- Upgrades to the existing baseball facilities.

These themes guided the development of the Master Plan concept for the site.

### BASEBALL FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Recommended improvements to support current and future baseball use include:

- Installation of barrier netting for safety.
- Replacement of existing bleachers with accessible seating options.
- Lighting upgrades to improve visibility and support extended play.
- Additional parking along Vestal Park Lane to accommodate peak seasonal use.

These enhancements aim to improve safety, accessibility, and the overall function of the facility.

### CONNECTIVITY & TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

A key component of the concept is expanding both internal and external trail connections. Proposed improvements include:

- A new trail along Harmony Drive, creating a direct link between Vestal Park and Potter Park.
- Potential trail corridors along Vestal Park Lane and Perry Highway, improving access from surrounding neighborhoods.

### INTERNAL PARK CIRCULATION & NATURAL AREA ACCESS

Within the park, a proposed boardwalk trail through the wetland would provide an opportunity for passive recreation and environmental education. This trail connects the Oakridge Drive neighborhood to the athletic facilities and create a unique nature-focused experience.

Interpretive signage along the boardwalk and surrounding pathways—highlighting native trees, plants, birds, and wildlife—would further support educational use and encourage visitors to explore the park beyond the athletic areas.

### SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING

Consistent, visible entrance signage and improved wayfinding should be incorporated throughout the site to strengthen park identity and help visitors navigate both active and natural areas.



### Recommendations

### Concept Cost Estimate

Item Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
Removals and Site Preparation				
Erosion and sedimentation controls	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000
Clearing and grubbing	1.00	AC	\$6,000	\$ 6,000
Earthwork	1,500	CY	\$16	\$ 24,000
Removals and Site Preparation				\$45,000
Hardscape				
Accessible parking - asphalt	200	SY	\$90	\$ 18,000
Parking striping	1	LS	\$800	\$ 800
Wheel stops	6	EA	\$250	\$ 1,500
Sidewalks - 6' concrete	1,300	SY	\$150	\$ 195,000
Connection trail - 10' asphalt	1,800	SY	\$150	\$ 270,000
Crosswalk striping	1	LS	\$500	\$ 500
Hardscape				\$485,800
Site Improvements and Amenities				
Park Sign	1	ALLOW	\$8,000	\$ 8,000
Vehicular regulatory signs	6	EA	\$350	\$ 2,100
Interpretive signs	5	EA	\$1,500	\$ 7,500
Crosswalk signs	1	EA	\$250	\$ 250
Baseball field netting	2,100	LF	\$25	\$ 52,500
Accessible bleachers	2	EA	\$25,000	\$ 50,000
Rain garden soil	120	CY	\$80	\$ 9,600
Site Improvements and Amenities				\$129,950
Architectural Features				
Boardwalk - 5' with railings and pilings	11,000	SF	\$150	\$ 1,650,000
Restrooms remodel	1	ALLOW	\$50,000	\$50,000
Architectural Features				\$1,700,000
Utilities				
Field lighting	10	EA	\$20,000	\$ 200,000
Electrical trenching, conduit, and wire	2,000	LF	\$30	\$ 60,000
Misc Electrical	1	EA	\$25,000	\$ 25,000
Underdrains - 4"	150	LF	\$65	\$ 9,750
Stormwater piping - 18"	250	LF	\$120	\$ 30,000
Stormwater structures for rain gardens	2	EA	\$8,000	\$ 16,000
Utilities				\$340,750
Plantings				
Rain garden seeding	1,500	SF	\$1	\$ 1,500
Trees	7	EA	\$900	\$ 6,300
Riparian buffer	580,000	SF	\$2	\$ 1,160,000
Plantings				\$1,167,800
Construction Cost				\$3,869,300
General Conditions			8%	\$ 309,544
			Subtotal	\$4,178,844
GC Overhead & Profit			10%	\$ 417,884
			Subtotal	\$4,596,728
Contingency			15%	\$689,509
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS				\$5,286,238

Opinion of Probable Construction Costs is made based on the experience and qualifications of Pashek + MTR, Ltd and represents reasonable judgment based on familiarity with the industry. Pashek + MTR, Ltd. has no control over the cost, or availability of labor, materials or equipment, or over market conditions or the provider's method of pricing. Pashek + MTR, Ltd cannot and does not guarantee that the opinion of probable cost provided the Owner will not vary from the actual cost experienced by the Owner.



TOWN OF MCCANDLESS ALLEGHENY COUNTY  
MASTER SITE PLAN, VESTAL PARK, 14.09 ACRES



KEY

- PARK BOUNDARY
- # EXISTING
- # PROPOSED
- ★ TRAIL HEAD
- PROPOSED
- EXISTING
- EXISTING WATER PASSAGE

LEGEND

- 1 Parking Lot (62 Spots)
- 2 Pressbox
- 3 Baseball Field
- 4 Batting Cage and storage
- 5 Accessible Concessions & Restrooms
- 6 Playground
- 7 Harmony Trail
- 8 Sidewalk
- 9 Bridge
- 10 Signage/Wayfinding
- 11 Barrier Netting
  - Install barrier netting between ballfield and ADA parking spaces
- 12 Accessible Boardwalk
  - Boardwalk trail through wetlands and interpretive signage
  - Restore riparian buffer along Pine Run
- 13 Upgraded Field Lighting
  - Field Test existing poles
  - Replace poles based on structural assessment
  - Replace all lighting with LED
- 14 Crosswalk with Signage
- 15 Trail/Connection
  - Obtain easements along Harmony Road to develop crushed limestone trail connection to Potter & Sarver Park
- 16 Accessible Bleachers
  - Replace existing bleachers with accessible bleachers with develop pathways to existing facilities
- 17 Accessible Parking
- 18 Riparian Buffer w/native plantings and stream restoration
- 19 Native Shade Trees
- 20 Parking
- 21 Outfield spectator seating with shade



THIS PROJECT IS PARTIALLY FUNDED THROUGH THE PA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT







TOWN OF MCCANDLESS ALLEGHENY COUNTY  
MASTER SITE PLAN, POTTER PARK, 18 ACRES

PASHEK MTR  
December 2025

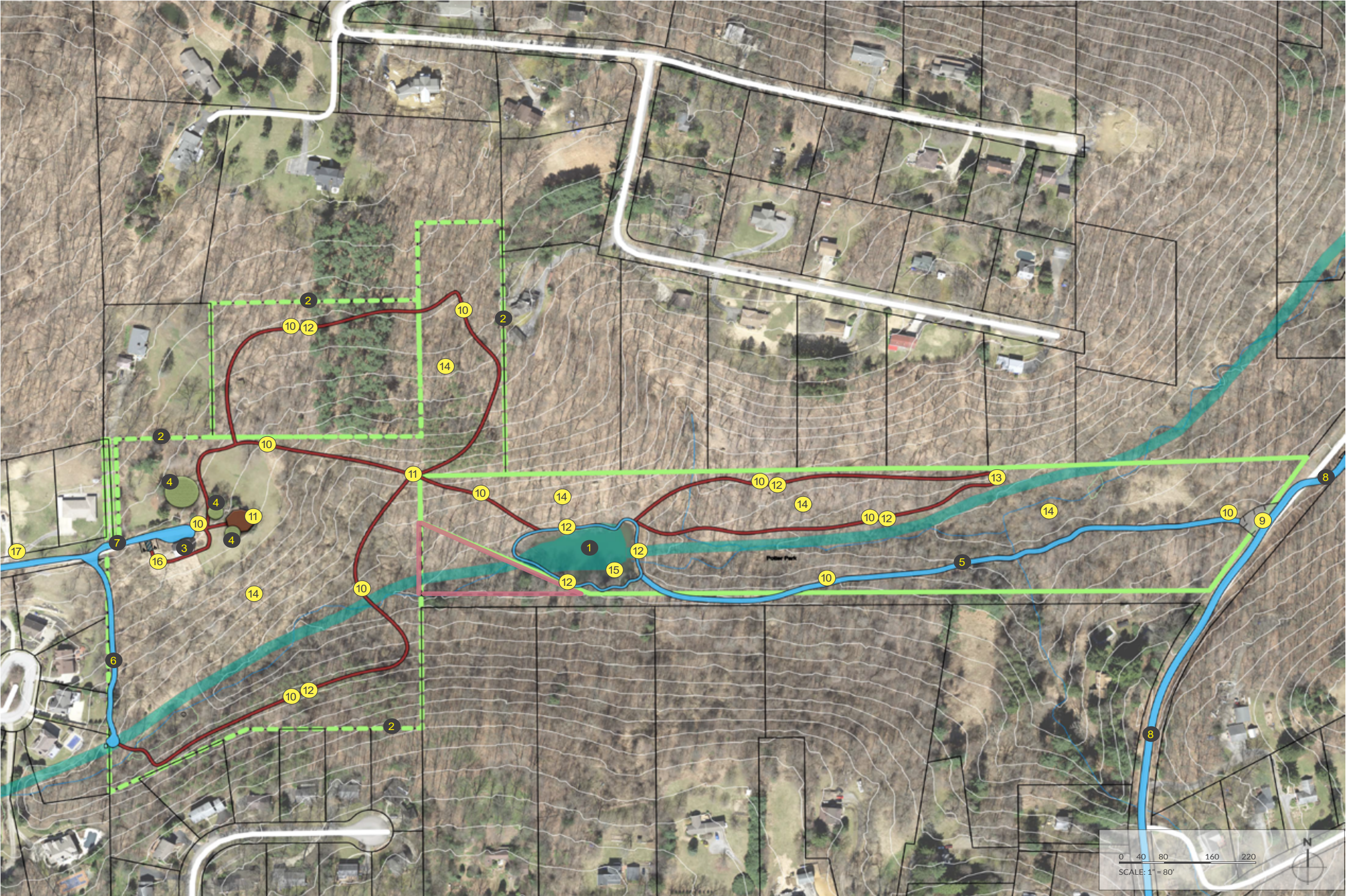


KEY

- PARK BOUNDARY
- EXISTING AMENITY
- PROPOSED AMENITY
- PROPOSED MAIER TRAIL
- EXISTING POTTER TRAIL
- SARVER PARK LAND
- POTENTIAL PARCEL
- EXISTING WATER PASSAGE

LEGEND

- 1 Potter Pond
  - Water quality testing
  - Streambank Stabilization
  - Aeration
- 2 Sarver Park
- 3 Barn (to be removed)
- 4 Historic Trees (3)
- 5 Trail to Pond
- 6 Utility Road (Sanitary Authority)
- 7 Driveway
- 8 Harmony Rd
- 9 Parking (4 spots)
  - Update Road/Pavement
  - Spray new lines
- 10 Interpretive/Wayfinding Signage (11)
  - Educational component along trail
  - Consistent Park & Rec branded signage
- 11 Accessible Gazebo/Arboretum
  - Dedicated protection of existing trees & plants
- 12 Benches (7)
- 13 Boardwalk Loop
  - Through wetlands
- 14 Invasive Plant Removal & Native Planting & Riparian Buffer
- 15 Fishing Deck (1)
- 16 Accessible Parking (2 spots)
- 17 Connection to Borough of Franklin Park



THIS PROJECT IS PARTIALLY FUNDED THROUGH THE PA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



# Vincentian Park

Vincentian Park is well-known to families participating in Little League and youth baseball. The park features four baseball fields and two tee-ball fields. Outside of its athletic use, the park is less frequently visited; however, those who use it consistently note its cleanliness, safety, and overall maintenance.

### IDENTIFIED NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

Public feedback focused primarily on the park’s baseball facilities. Users expressed interest in:

- Lighting for evening play.
- Additional and improved parking.
- Enhancements to batting cages and restroom facilities.

### BALLFIELD & FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

The Master Plan concept emphasizes improvements that support baseball activities while enhancing accessibility and user comfort. Recommended upgrades include:

- Clearly defined parking areas with accessible routes to all ballfields.
- Accessible and shaded seating for players and spectators.
- New batting cages to improve practice and game experience.
- Wayfinding signage to assist navigation and identify park amenities.

### LANDSCAPE & ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENTS

To improve the park’s visual character and ecological function, the plan recommends:

- Native plantings throughout the park.
- Riparian buffers to protect and support adjacent wetland habitat.

### TRAIL CONNECTIVITY

A proposed trail connecting from Vincentian Terrace Plaza would improve access for pedestrians and cyclists and integrate the park more effectively with the surrounding community.

### Concept Cost Estimate

Item Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
Removals and Site Preparation				
Erosion and sedimentation controls	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000
Clearing and grubbing	1.00	AC	\$6,000	\$ 6,000
Earthwork	1,500	CY	\$16	\$ 24,000
Removals and Site Preparation				\$45,000
Hardscape				
Milling and overlay of parking	1,300	SY	\$50	\$ 65,000
Accessible parking - asphalt	200	SY	\$90	\$ 18,000
Parking striping	1	LS	\$1,200	\$ 1,200
Wheel stops	26	EA	\$250	\$ 6,500
Connection trail - 10' asphalt	350	SY	\$150	\$ 52,500
Hardscape				\$143,200
Site Improvements and Amenities				
Vehicular regulatory signs	6	EA	\$350	\$ 2,100
Wayfinding signs	3	EA	\$250	\$ 750
Batting cages	3	ALLOW	\$20,000	\$ 60,000
Rain garden soil	450	CY	\$80	\$ 36,000
Site Improvements and Amenities				\$98,850
Architectural Features				
Spectator area canopies	1	ALLOW	\$150,000	\$ 150,000
Architectural Features				\$150,000
Utilities				
Underdrains - 4"	350	LF	\$65	\$ 22,750
Stormwater piping - 18"	260	LF	\$120	\$ 31,200
Stormwater structures for rain gardens	4	EA	\$8,000	\$ 32,000
Utilities				\$85,950
Plantings				
Rain garden seeding	5,800	SF	\$1	\$ 5,800
Riparian buffer	40,000	SF	\$2	\$ 80,000
Native plantings	1	ALLOW	\$120,000	\$ 120,000
Plantings				\$205,800
Construction Cost				\$728,800
General Conditions			8%	\$ 58,304
			Subtotal	\$787,104
GC Overhead & Profit			10%	\$ 78,710
			Subtotal	\$865,814
Contingency			15%	\$129,872
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS				\$995,687

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TOWN OF MCCANDLESS ALLEGHENY COUNTY  
MASTER SITE PLAN, VINCENTIAN PARK, 18 ACRES

PASHEK MTR  
December 2025



- KEY
- PARK BOUNDARY
  - EXISTING
  - PROPOSED

- LEGEND
- 1 Baseball Fields
  - 2 T-ball Fields
  - 3 Roadway
  - 4 Concessions
  - 5 Pressbox
  - 6 Inclusive Playground
  - 7 New Batting Cages
  - 8 Native Plantings
  - 9 Defined Parking Spaces (56 Spots)
  - 10 Accessible Parking Spaces & Pathway
  - 11 Vincentian Terrace Plaza Connection
  - 12 Entrance & Wayfinding
  - 13 Riparian Buffer w/native Plantings and stream restoration
  - 14 Shaded Spectator Seating



THIS PROJECT IS PARTIALLY FUNDED THROUGH THE PA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



# Pontiac Park

To evaluate the feasibility of developing a park on a former Public Works storage area, the following steps are recommended:

- Conduct a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) to identify past uses, potential risks, and areas of concern.
- If needed, conduct a Phase II ESA to confirm the presence or absence of contamination.
- Perform a geotechnical investigation, including soil borings, to assess fill depth, settlement risk, and overall subsurface conditions.
- Determine the type and quality of existing fill. Depending on results, special design considerations may be required, including:
  - Modified foundation systems for buildings
  - Restrictions or extra measures for stormwater management
- Protocols for handling contaminated or hazardous materials

## Concept Cost Estimate

Item Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
Removals and Site Preparation				
Erosion and sedimentation controls	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000
Clearing and grubbing	1.25	AC	\$6,000	\$ 7,500
Earthwork	2,500	CY	\$16	\$ 40,000
Removals and Site Preparation				\$62,500
Hardscape				
Accessible parking - asphalt	70	SY	\$90	\$ 6,300
Parking striping	1	LS	\$500	\$ 500
Wheel stops	2	EA	\$250	\$ 500
Walking trail - asphalt	3,400	SY	\$70	\$ 238,000
Playground surfacing	22,000	SF	\$30	\$ 660,000
Hardscape				\$905,300
Site Improvements and Amenities				
Park Sign	1	ALLOW	\$8,000	\$ 8,000
Vehicular regulatory signs	2	EA	\$350	\$ 700
Play structure	1	LS	\$250,000	\$ 250,000
Wood fence	3,400	ALLOW	\$120	\$ 408,000
Rain garden soil	370	CY	\$80	\$ 29,600
Bike racks	2	EA	\$500	\$ 1,000
Trash / recycling	1	EA	\$2,000	\$ 2,000
Benches	3	EA	\$2,500	\$ 7,500
Site Improvements and Amenities				\$706,800
Utilities				
Underdrains - 4"	250	LF	\$65	\$ 16,250
Stormwater piping - 18"	120	LF	\$120	\$ 14,400
Stormwater structures for rain gardens	2	EA	\$8,000	\$ 16,000
Utilities				\$46,650
Plantings				
Rain garden seeding	5,000	SF	\$1	\$ 5,000
Meadow seeding	200,000	SF	\$1	\$ 200,000
Flowering trees	17	EA	\$900	\$ 15,300
Plantings				\$220,300
Construction Cost				\$1,941,550
General Conditions			8%	\$ 155,324
			Subtotal	\$2,096,874
GC Overhead & Profit			10%	\$ 209,687
			Subtotal	\$2,306,561
Contingency			15%	\$345,984
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS				\$2,652,546

Opinion of Probable Construction Costs is made based on the experience and qualifications of Pashek + MTR, Ltd and represents reasonable judgment based on familiarity with the industry. Pashek + MTR, Ltd. has no control over the cost, or availability of labor, materials or equipment, or over market conditions or the provider's method of pricing. Pashek + MTR, Ltd cannot and does not guarantee that the opinion of probable cost provided the Owner will not vary from the actual cost experienced by the Owner.



# PONTIAC PARK

## TOWN OF MCCANDLESS

Site Plan

- Legend
- 1

Trees
  - Supports pollinators, improves soil health, biodiversity boost
  - Manages stormwater
  - Low maintenance
- 2

Native Meadow
  - Supports native insects, birds, and soil health
  - Example: Flowering Dogwood, Eastern Redbud, Serviceberry, American Basswood
- 3

Open Lawn Play Space
- 4

Accessible Parking (2 VAN spaces)
- 5

Accessible Multi-Use Trail
- 6

Native Flowering Trees
  - Supports native insects, birds, and soil health
  - Example: Flowering Dogwood, Eastern Redbud, Serviceberry, American Basswood
- 7

Wooden Fence
- 8

Signage/Wayfinding
- 9

North Nineteen Connection
- 10

Inclusive Playground
  - Sensory play elements
  - Swings, Rope Climbing, Playhouse
  - Variety of levels/challenges for all ages and abilities





# Implementation

# 5



## Now WHAT?

The purpose of this Parks Master Plan report is to help the Town of McCandless achieve its goals in creating vibrant parks and a wide range of recreational opportunities. These stated goals are:

- Create vibrant community spaces that foster connection and engagement
- Offer a variety of activities for all age groups
- Enhance safety and security throughout the park system
- Provide welcoming, accessible environments for outdoor recreation

The first step towards achieving these goals has been done: this Plan. Now it is the Town's responsibility to take this plan and put it into action. The following pages will provide McCandless with practical strategies that will lead to success.

## General Strategies and Action Steps

This Plan has provided the Town with an analysis of each of their parks and recommendations built upon public engagement. The order in which these recommendations are to be implemented will be for the Town's leadership to decide. Should sufficient parking and safe traffic circulation be addressed at Potter Park before boardwalk trails? Which connections within the Town should be made first: improving sidewalks or extending the Harmony-Brandt Trail? It will not be easy to know which priorities are better than other priorities (and you can never please everyone), but general considerations can guide Town leaders in making these decisions:



Action Steps	Strategies	Implementation Range
Build out a cycling and pedestrian network.	Continue to build out the cycling/pedestrian network through trails, paths and sidewalks to create safe connections between destinations and neighborhoods.	Ongoing
As part of the maintenance program, evaluate whether improvements can be made part of paving/road projects.	Improve safe on-road riding/walking conditions	3-6 years
Develop agreements for use of all parks, and programs including establishing user fees.	Develop an agreement with organizations to outline maintenance and operations of the facilities. (A sample can be found in the Appendix.)	0-3 years
Upgrade all parks and facilities to meet the 2010 ADA Standards for accessible design.	These areas include parking, pathways, and seating. Capital improvements should address accessibility in all parks.	0-3 years
Review and update Mandatory Dedication Ordinance on a regular basis.	In conjunction with the Planning Department, review Mandatory Dedication/Fee In Lieu Ordinance to establish and secure funding	0-3 years
Increase Sponsorship Opportunities .	Continue to develop new sponsorships for naming rights on park facilities, programs, and amenities opportunities. Find funding/grant options.	3-6 Years
Develop Consistent Wayfinding and Signage.	Develop sign standards throughout the Town. Incorporate the Park and Recreation logo, QR codes and information on trails and parks.	3-6 Years



Maintenance Charts for Each Park

The NRPA finds that 46% of Park and Recreation staff are devoted to maintenance and operations. Most communities are understaffed in this area and those tasked with the maintenance of the parks are typically staff members of the community's Department of Public Works. While the sharing of staff in this way often works well for smaller communities, park improvements go hand-in-hand with more maintenance. It is vital to ensure McCandless staffs enough operations/maintenance staff to continually care with park facilities.

The charts below show the current estimated hours it takes to maintain each park with the current facilities and amenities. As improvements are made, these hours will increase.

Devlin Park

Facility	Qty.	Unit	Hrs. per Unit	Times per week	Weeks per season	Total Hours
Devlin Memorial Pavilion with Restrooms	1	EA	0.5	7	30	105
Basketball Court	1	EA	0.25	1	28	7
Tennis Court	2	EA	0.25	1	28	14
Pickleball Court	2	EA	0.25	1	28	14
Sand Volleyball Court	1	EA	1	1	28	28
Playground	2	EA	1.5	2	40	240
Baseball Field	1	EA	1	1	28	28
Baseball Fields - Mowing	1.44	ACRE	2	1	30	120
Bleachers - Trash Removal, Repairs	2	EA	0.25	1	28	64
Dug Outs - Trash Removal, Repairs	2	EA	0.5	1	28	24
Multipurpose Field	2	EA	1	1	28	56
Multipurpose Field - Mowing	3.1	ACRE	2	1	30	186
UPMC Fitness Court	1	EA	0.5	1	40	20
Bridge	1	EA	10	1	2	20
Seating and Benches	1	LS	5	1	2	20.475
Trash Collection - Garbage Receptacles	1	LS	2	3	40	80
Lighting	8	EA	4	1	4	128
Parking Area - Sweeping, trash removal, repairs	3	EA	16	0.02	40	38.4
Mowing - Extra Space (Not Fields)	4.26	ACRE	2	1	30	255.6
Snow Plowing - Parking	1	MILE	3.9	0.5	21	40.95
Snow Plowing - Pathways	7675	SF	0.1	1	21	16117.5
Tree Maintenance	1	LS	40	1	2	80
Stream Maintenance	1	LS	12	1	2	24
Leaf Removal	23	ACRE	1.3	1	6	179.4
						17,890

Wall Park

Facility	Qty.	Unit	Hrs. per Unit	Times per week	Weeks per season	Total Hours
Pavilion with Restrooms	1	EA	0.5	7	30	105
Baseball Fields	3	EA	1	1	28	84
Baseball Fields - Mowing	1.6	ACRE	2	1	30	84
Bleachers - Trash Removal, Repairs	6	EA	0.25	1	28	42
Dug Outs - Trash Removal, Repairs	6	EA	0.5	1	28	84
Tennis Court	2	EA	0.25	1	28	14
Playground	2	EA	1.5	2	40	240
Basketball Court	1	EA	0.25	1	28	7
Seating and Benches	1	LS	2	1	2	4
Trash Collection - Garbage Receptacles	1	LS	2	3	40	240
Parking Area - Sweeping, trash removal, repairs	1	EA	16	0.02	40	12.8
Mowing - Extra Space (Not Fields)	0.76	ACRE	2	1	30	45.6
Snow Plowing - Parking	0.2	MILE	3.9	0.5	21	8.19
Tree Maintenance	1	LS	40	1	2	80
Leaf Removal	4.62	ACRE	1.3	1	6	36.036
						1,087

Vestal Park

Facility	Qty.	Unit	Hrs. per Unit	Times per week	Weeks per season	Total Hours
Concession Stand with Restrooms	1	EA	0.5	7	30	105
Baseball Fields	3	EA	1	1	28	84
Baseball Fields - Mowing	1.4	ACRE	2	1	30	84
Bleachers - Trash Removal, Repairs	6	EA	0.25	1	28	42
Dug Outs - Trash Removal, Repairs	6	EA	0.5	1	28	84
Press Box	1	EA	0.5	1	28	14
Batting Cages	4	EA	0.25	2	28	56
Playground	1	EA	1.5	2	40	120
Boardwalk	1	LS	16	1	4	64
Seating and Benches	1	LS	12	1	2	24
Trash Collection - Garbage Receptacles (Est 10 Cans)	1	LS	2	3	40	240
Lighting	12	EA	4	1	2	96
Parking Area - Sweeping, trash removal, repairs	1	EA	16	0.02	40	12.8
Mowing - Extra Space (Not Fields)	0.33	ACRE	2	1	30	19.8
Snow Plowing - Parking	0.5	MILE	3.9	0.5	21	20.475
Tree Maintenance	1	LS	40	1	2	80
Leaf Removal	14	ACRE	1.3	1	6	109.2
						1,255



Potter Park (not including Sarver Park)

Facility	Qty.	Unit	Hrs. per Unit	Times per week	Weeks per season	Total Hours
Seating and Benches	1	LS	4	1	2	8
Trash Collection - Garbage Receptacles	1	EA	0.2	3	40	24
Parking Area - Sweeping, trash removal, repairs	1	EA	16	0.02	40	12.8
Pathways Maintenance	1	LS	12	1	4	48
Pond Maintenance	1	LS	30	1	2	60
						153

Vincentian Park

Facility	Qty.	Unit	Hrs. per Unit	Times per week	Weeks per season	Total Hours
Concessions with Restrooms	2	EA	0.5	7	30	210
Multipurpose Field	1	EA	1	1	28	28
Multipurpose Field - Mowing	2.46	ACRE	2	1	30	147.6
Baseball Field	3.5	EA	1	1	28	98
Baseball Fields - Mowing	3.49	ACRE	2	1	30	84
Bleachers - Trash Removal, Repairs	10	EA	0.25	1	28	70
Dug Outs - Trash Removal, Repairs	10	EA	0.5	1	28	140
Pavilion/Concession Seating Area	1	EA	0.5	7	30	105
Batting Cages	1	EA	0.25	2	28	14
T-Ball Field	2	EA	1	1	28	56
T-Ball Field - Mowing	0.59	ACRE	2	1	30	35.4
Tennis Court	4	EA	0.25	1	28	186
Playground	1	EA	1.5	2	40	120
Seating and Benches	1	LS	5	1	2	10
Trash Collection - Garbage Receptacles	1	LS	2	3	40	240
Parking Area - Sweeping, trash removal, repairs	4	EA	16	0.02	40	51.2
Mowing - Extra Space (Not Fields)	4	ACRE	2	1	30	240
Snow Plowing - Roadways	0.87	MILE	3.9	0.5	21	35.6265
Tree Maintenance	1	LS	40	1	2	80
Leaf Removal	18	ACRE	1.3	1	6	140.4
						2,091

Capital Improvements

By definition, capital improvement funds are used to pay for long-term investments that improve or enhance a property, building, or infrastructure. To implement all of the proposed park improvements recommended herein, the project costs (in 2025 dollars) are approximately \$18.3 to \$18.5 million. (This figure does not include connections outside of ones developed in the park concept plans.)

High Priority Capital Improvements (1-3 years)

Devlin Park	
Upgrade park to meet 2010 ADA Standards for accessible design	TBD per Capital Improvement
Ballfield upgrades: field grading and stormwater management	\$60,000
Riparian buffer planters and stormwater management (Submit DCNR Grant)	\$8,000
Park signage	\$1,000
Wall Park	
Upgrade park to meet 2010 ADA Standards for accessible design	TBD per Capital Improvement
Court paving	\$87,500
Court painting	\$38,000
Player benches	\$6,000
Removal of grass infields and regrading ballfields & infield mix	\$40,000
Overflow, ADA Parking	\$120,000
Batting cage	\$20,000
Vestal Park	
Upgrade park to meet 2010 ADA Standards for accessible design	TBD per Capital Improvement
Ballfield lighting, electrical and poles	\$285,000
Electric to storage shed	\$10,000
Riparian buffer planters and stormwater management (Submit DCNR Grant)	\$8,000
Park signage	\$1,000
Potter and Sarver Parks	
Acquire adjacent property	TBD
Upgrade park to meet 2010 ADA Standards for accessible design	TBD per Capital Improvement
Fishing dock	\$90,000
Boardwalk: 5 foot with railings and pilings	\$675,000
Riparian buffer planters and stormwater management (Submit DCNR Grant)	\$8,000
Park signage	\$1,000
Vincentian Park	
Upgrade park to meet 2010 ADA Standards for accessible design	TBD per Capital Improvement
Batting cages	\$50,000
Shade structures	\$50,000
Riparian buffer planters and stormwater management (Submit DCNR Grant)	\$8,000
Park signage	\$1,000
Pontiac Park	
Removals and site preparation	\$62,500
Inclusive play equipment and surfacing	\$400,000
Accessible parking and pathway	\$10,000
Park signage	\$1,000



## Partnerships

The Town benefits from an active network of local organizations, civic groups, and institutions that can support future park improvements and programming. These partners provide expertise, volunteers, educational opportunities, and potential funding to help activate and sustain the park system.

### Environmental Partners:

- The Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) is a key resource for habitat restoration, native planting, watershed protection, and nature-based programming.

### Educational and Cultural Partners:

- Northland Public Library can offer outdoor learning programs, story times, lectures, and community events.

### Volunteer and Community Groups:

- Existing volunteer groups support maintenance, cleanups, and event operations. Scouting groups, youth organizations, and school service clubs can assist with small improvement projects, stewardship efforts, and ongoing maintenance.
- Civic groups, EAC, neighborhood associations—including garden clubs—can contribute to landscaping, community gardens, trail stewardship, and beautification initiatives.

### Health, Wellness, and Business Partners:

- Local health organizations can support recreation programming, fitness classes, wellness walks, and health-focused events. Businesses and employers throughout McCandless and the North Hills can sponsor events, amenities, or volunteer days.

### Educational Institutions:

- The North Allegheny School District remains a key partner for environmental learning programs and shared use of outdoor spaces.

### Sustainability Organizations:

- Groups focused on renewable energy and energy efficiency can provide guidance for sustainable park infrastructure and public education efforts.

### Community Volunteers:

- There is strong potential to establish a dedicated volunteer group to support long-term park care and programming. Such a group could assist with tree planting, fundraising, maintenance, and annual cleanup efforts. Mobilizing residents fosters local pride, strengthens community ownership, and supports long-term sustainability.
- A relevant model is the “Friends of South Side Park,” which successfully recruits volunteers for conservation and improvement initiatives. A similar network in McCandless would help maintain momentum for park enhancements and community-driven programming.

## Programming

The Town should implement a comprehensive programming strategy to activate park improvements and maximize their benefit. Programs may be managed directly by the Town’s Parks and Recreation Department or developed in collaboration with community partners, depending on scale and goals.

Offering a diverse mix of activities—such as fitness classes, cultural programs, workshops,

and recreational events—will attract a broad spectrum of visitors and create an inclusive, vibrant atmosphere. Ongoing coordination with community groups, businesses, and residents will ensure that programming reflects local interests and enhances the value of the Town’s park system.

## Funding

Searching for funding options can seem arduous and is certainly time consuming. Fortunately, once valuable funding options are found, the same information can often be used in applying for all of them.

### Grant Strategies

Grants can be very competitive. Often funding agencies receive requests that amount to as much as ten times more than the money available. It is, therefore, very important that you are well prepared in submitting your application. The following outlines several steps that can significantly improve your chances of receiving a grant.

1. Be well prepared
  - Know the funding agency: contact persons, addresses, and phone numbers.
  - Be sure you are an eligible applicant for the agency and program through which you intend to apply.
  - Investigate each grant opportunity to be sure that what you are applying for meets the funding criteria.
  - Be complete and accurate in your application. Do not assume that you will have an opportunity to correct mistakes, update data, etc.
  - Submit your application several days prior to the deadline; this assures it is in on time and shows that you are well prepared.
2. Have a Vision, a Plan and a project that is ready to go.
  - A vision shows the funding agency that you have looked to the future. It shows where your application fits into the bigger picture in your community and/or department. A vision can come from your Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plan or be a part of a broader community effort.
  - A plan shows that you have looked at the details of what you want to do. Be more specific in your plan than in your vision.
  - Describe where your matching funds will come from. Show that you can leverage funding from a variety of sources including local taxes, private contributions, other grants, etc.
  - Describe in detail how you will address maintenance of any facilities. Maintenance is a key factor if an agency is to invest large dollars in your project.
  - Show previous successes you have had. Show existing parks that have previously been funded. Indicate how your successes in other projects will impact the project you are applying for.
3. Contact the Funding Agencies







- Make a personal contact with the funding agency as early in the process as you can. Keep them informed. Show them your vision and how this specific project fits into it.

A great place to start looking for grant opportunities is this [Funding Sources](#) booklet. It will provide information for each grant and links for further information and ways to apply.

Other Funding Strategies

It is wise to consider more than one grant source for multi-faceted projects. Different agencies may be willing to provide funding for different portions of your project. For example, if a project includes construction of trails and development of a neighborhood park, there are agencies that will fund trails and others who will fund parks. Applying to both types of agencies for funding that meets their specific criteria enhances the likelihood of receiving a grant.

- Surrounding Municipalities - In some cases, surrounding municipalities have a specific interest in park facilities located within the Area. In these cases, there may be interest in making a financial contribution toward the project.
- Local Organizations - Often, local recreation organizations are willing to raise funds to be used for upgrades to their facilities. These funds should be considered as part of the local match for grant funding. For example, if a soccer organization is already investing annually to upgrade facilities, they may be willing to utilize several years' worth of that investment toward a major renovation of the soccer facility. This could provide funds to be used as matching funds for a grant.
- Funds Already Planned for Use - It is also helpful to consider funds that may already be allocated for use in or near a park that may be used as a source of matching funds. For instance, if a water or sewer line is being planned to run through a park, tapping into that line could make the money spent for its installation an eligible match for a park project. The same could be true of parking areas, roads, trails, trailheads, and other projects.
- Creativity - Creativity is key to finding and leveraging funding sources with one another. The intent is to reduce the local share as low as possible while accomplishing the goals of the project. Consider as many options as you can identify. Then contact the funding agencies to determine whether your plan meets their requirements.

Mandatory Dedication or Fees-In-Lieu of Ordinance

A "Mandatory Dedication/Fee-in-Lieu Ordinance" is a valuable tool for enhancing and expanding park systems in a community, particularly in growing areas where land development is occurring. This ordinance requires developers to either dedicate a portion of land for park use or pay a fee-in-lieu of dedicating land, which is then used to fund park development or improvements.

These ordinances are very valuable to parks and community recreation. They:

- Ensure sufficient parkland for a growing population
- Promote accessibility and equity
- Address the financial burden of park development
- Preserve open space and environmental benefits



- Support long-term planning and sustainability
- Foster community health and well-being
- Incentivize developer investment
- Improve the community's quality of life
- Give flexibility in fee-in-lieu provisions
- Allow legal and policy support of park planning

Generally, a fee-in-lieu follows a basic formula:

(Required Land Area in Acres) X (Fair Market Value per Acre) = Fee-in-Lieu Amount

For example, if a developer is building a subdivision with 100 houses and the local regulations require 1 acre of parkland per 50 dwelling units, this would mean 2 acres should be devoted to parkland. If the current fair market value of the land in the area is \$50,000 per acre then the fee-in-lieu amount owed to the Town by the developer would be \$100,000.

The document [Public Dedication of Land and Fees-in-Lieu for Parks and Recreation](#) prepared by the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources provides other options to determine the appropriate fees associated with development.

Sponsorships

Sponsorship opportunities are an elective way to provide secure funding for special events and facilities.

Sponsorship could include:

- Logo on all event correspondence including print and digital promotional materials.
- Banner, posters and/or yard signs are displayed at the event.
- Social media recognition and tagging.
- Online presence including website logo with hyperlink and direct email blast hyperlink recognition.
- Attendance at an event on-site with a booth.
- Athletic field and amenities naming rights.

The associated cost of sponsorships would need to be determined by the program, event, or necessary facility upgrades determined by the Town..

Creating a Foundation or Committee

Finding funding resources can be a full time job: talking to recreation-minded people in the community, researching feasible funding options, or filling out massive amounts of grant paperwork. In lieu of hiring someone to focus solely on funding, an option is creating a foundation or committee of people from the community who really love the parks and want to see them flourish.

This foundation or committee would help the Town prioritize projects within the parks that need funding. They could consider fundraising options, facilitate events to raise those funds, and see to the investment of those funds in the projects that have been chosen. A good example of an organization that does this is the [Cranberry Township Foundation](#) in Butler County.



### Programming

Developing recreational programming that will attract people of all ages is a challenge all Parks and Recreation Departments face. Successful programming is often developed through trial and error as so many unknowns are faced: interest levels, advertisting reach, competition with everything else people are involved in, finding good instructors...the list can seem daunting. However, it can also be the small things that get the ball rolling.

Today the amount of time kids spend outside is alarmingly low while screen time is at an all-time high. Connecting children and nature has important health benefits. Children who spend time outside are active, imaginative, have longer attention spans, and are less likely to be aggressive. In addition, children who spend time in nature regularly appreciate the world around them and want to learn more about the environment.

There are many apps and websites available to encourage children to participate in outdoor activities. A sampling includes:

- <https://www.naturespots.net/> - NatureSpots is a great hub for local nature-based organizations and nature enthusiasts to share favorite places, upcoming events, interests, photos and more.
- [www.kidweatherapp.com](http://www.kidweatherapp.com) - A true weather app for kids designed by a six-year-old boy (and his meteorologist dad).
- <https://starwalk.space/en> Star Walk is the most beautiful stargazing app. It will become your interactive guide to the night sky.
- <https://www.inaturalist.org/> - iNaturalists is a joint initiative of the California Academy of Sciences and the National Geographic Society. Record your encounters, learn about nature, create useful data, become a citizen scientist, or run a Bioblitz.

### Establishing Recreation Program Pricing

Creating pricing that fits the program is not an exact science. The Department should establishment sustainable pricing for programs, including the use of facilities such as ballfields and courts, in order to fund future capital improvement projects as well as program expansion.

Setting a cost recovery percentage for recreation programs is a way to establish prices which will recover the indirect administrative overhead cost. To achieve this, the total direct program cost are multiplied by a cost recovery percentage. This percentage is determined individually by the Town for each category of programs it offers. For instance, if direct expenses for an adult class are \$100, this amount may be multiplied by a cost recovery percentage of 80%. This means that making \$180 in gross revenue for this program will recover both the direct and indirect costs. If the minimum number of participants is 10, the price per person would be \$18.

### Setting Pricing or Cost Recovery Policy

Establishing a reasonable fee must take into consideration important factors such as demand, quality, and recovery of direct and indirect costs, including supplies and instructor fees. One basic formula for this is:

$$P = \frac{I + O + RF + CS}{S}$$

P = Price charged for program

RF = Rental fee

I = Instructor fee

CS = Consumable supplies

O = Overhead (utilities, supplies, etc.)

S = Students in program

Another option for cost recovery pricing would for the Town to set a percentage for each program or category of programs. For example: adult programs may have a cost recovery of 80%, whereas the youth sports programs may have a cost recovery of 50%. The important thing is to stay flexible and provide quality programs while recouping some of the associated expenses.

### Trails

The process for acquiring needed easements for trails is flexible and may be based on the Town’s comfort level with opening conversations with property owners. Naturally, the community may wish to consult with its solicitor, as legal advice may be needed.

The nature of an initial conversation about an easement could depend on the location of the property, the importance an easement to the success of a project, and any understanding of the property owner’s point of view about a project. The community may consider it advantageous to approach an owner through official channels or could arrange for a member of the Town's government to take the first step on neighbor-to neighbor basis.

Pennsylvania-specific information on easement acquisition, easement agreements, sidewalk design and implementation, and strategic use of the Town’s official map may be found at [conservationtools.org](http://conservationtools.org). This site also provides model easement agreement documents, both simple and detailed versions.

### SUCCESSFUL IMPLMENTATION

The successful implementation of the McCandless's Parks Master Plan depends on a variety of factors, including but not limited to, the following:

1. **Public Support and Education** - McCandless's residents' support of future efforts to develop recreation opportunities and preserve open space is critical to the future of a successful system. Immediately following the approval of this planning document, efforts should be made to publicize its findings and recommendations.
2. **Involvement of Elected Officials** - As the primary decision-makers of the Town, elected officials should be updated on a regular basis regarding the recommendations of this plan, the status of implementation, public support, and related issues as they arise.
3. **Financial Support** - The Town continues to show a commitment to a quality recreation and trail system. Commitment to funding recreation and connectivity projects will greatly influence the success with which the recommendations of this plan are implemented. Alternative funding sources should be continually explored to supplement the contributions of local governments and local organizations.
4. **Volunteer and Partnership Efforts** - A strong volunteer base including partnerships with organizations such as the North Allegheny School District, McCandless Athletic Association , Ingomar Franklin Park Little League, McCandless Soccer Club and others can make a large impact to the implementation of the plan’s recommendations.







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